

Has Man an Immortal Soul?



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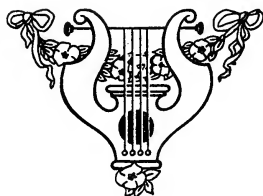




S. T. SKIDMORE.

Has Man An Immortal Soul?

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HAS MAN AN IMMORTAL SOUL? MATERIALISTIC.

This volume is offered as an endeavor to aid those who have a desire to acquire a more clear understanding of the findings of Modern Materialism; surrounding this intensely interesting, and what is presumed by some, to be the most vital question that has ever confronted the mind of man.

Materialism is doubtless a foreign theory to many, for their benefit let it be said, in its primitive form Materialism taught that all spiritual phenomena was accountable to material for its existence. This form of Materialism was handed down from the earliest part of the Christian era, but like all other ancient calculations, was deterementally contaminated with mythological superstition.

Modern Materialism denies the existence of spirits, it defines that which appears to be spiritual phenomena as being only physical effect, brought about by no abnormal or supernatural cause, but are attributed to the material activities of physical organism.

Materialism rejects the theory of divine design, and holds forth the conclusion that all material construction and energy are the result of cosmological operations. The theory of divine design was deducted at a time in man's history when profound ignorance and superstition were the most marked characteristics of his mentality. And dominated every mental effort during his existence.

Cosmological truths are the principals on which materialistic findings are based. Only facts in evidence are used in these calculations. All scien-

tific researches have been conducted by the most efficient scholars of modern times aided by numerous scientifically devised instruments and appliances most of which have come into use almost within our own recollection and under our own observation.

Modern Materialists claim to produce evidences that disprove the existence of the supposed immortal soul. However, the burden of proof should not rest with them for it was theology that made the claim that the soul is a reality, therefore they should produce scientific evidences of their contention.

While all works of this character receive the severest criticism from those who accept on theological grounds, any form of the so-called spiritual religions, there are those who have penetrated the subject with sufficient inquiry to gain an intensive understanding of the Bible, yet find no satisfaction therein but do not have time or inclination to bring out a line of thought and calculations that will be satisfactory and triumphal at the close of any religious onslaught.

This work is written in as plain and simple a manner as possible and handle the subject in an intelligent way. The author has avoided any long drawn and tiresome explanations, but plunges directly into each division of the subject and disposes of it in as few words as is consistent in making clear his views.

Only scientifically established facts will be set forth for consideration, and it is from these alone that Materialism endeavors to prove its assertions. No mythological or superstitious ideas are taken into consideration in any way. Neither will traditional history in any form be examined in trying to solve the mysteries of the immortal soul as all such

literature is considered by materialists as incompetent and not trustworthy, therefore cannot be relied upon to yield the kind of evidence they are seeking.

Hesitation in accepting new truths is a characteristic failing among mankind. They demand the facts regarding all matters of interest to them, but refuse to accept them if they are offensive to their wishes. We see this trait most plainly marked when we approach and question their belief in an immortal soul. They hesitate to accept the findings of Materialism until all question is removed.

History disproves that Materialistic theories are of German origin, as has been recently charged on numerous occasions.

Is there a man, graced with a tear
Who would not rather believe, every brother here,
And every one passed on to the deep
Should rest in everlasting sleep,
Than to believe one single soul,
Should be condemned in the hell of old.

Has Man An Immortal Soul?

CHAPTER I.

Since man's mind has become sharpened, through the process of intellectual development, fancies have flitted across his path of vision as he peers into the mystic maze beyond, carrying with them an uncontrollable desire to attain the absolute and intrinsic truth, regarding the supposed immortal soul.

Traditional history and mythology have given to us their compromising paraphrases. None of which answer the question to the satisfaction of the honest inquirer. It has been said, there is danger in skepticism. But there is greater danger in sham and falsehood. This is made more plain when we try to bring ourselves to believe that which is really unbelievable.

If we are to inquire into the subject to a point that will satisfy the scientific mind, then we must seek the infallible, cold and unadulterated truth. Let this truth prove to us what it will, and then prepare ourselves to meet conditions as they are.

If we are inclined to accept ancient mythology as preponderate we may gain some satisfaction from the belief so derived, but we lose the semblance of a sincere investigator who is earnestly endeavoring to establish the unmistakable and unwavering situation surrounding the case.

Along this road of inquiry, each and every foot step must be lighted by the fascinating rays of

science. Honesty must be the guiding finger to indicate the way, while only facts shall be accepted, if we are to reach a conclusion comprising reasonable certainty.

With this determination in mind, we will be forced to reject any statements set forth in ancient or modern literature which the author cannot substantiate philosophically and scientifically. It may be said that proofs other than scientific demonstrations cannot be relied upon to any considerable degree, and as it is impossible to obtain such demonstrations in some cases, it then becomes necessary to take into account every available fragment of tangible evidence from which we must draw our conclusions, after a careful system of reasoning. Then if our deductions prove faulty, it cannot be said that science is to blame. It is nature that is at fault for not establishing enough evidence from which to form an opinion. Yet in those cases where it seems almost impossible to settle the question, there could be no real reason why we should try to bring ourselves to believe the unbelievable. Or that which is not in accordance with philosophic reason.

The scientific phase is not the enigma that many are prone to hink it is. If we were asked to define the word "scientific", we would say—it is subject made simple. When a subject is analyzed in such a way as to give us a clear understanding of each of its divisions, it is then we have the scientific conception of the otherwise perplexing problem.

The masses of the people have been brought up and educated from infancy, through untold generations, to have an intent desire for a life beyond the grave. And it is for this reason they are so ardent in nursing any doctrine both ancient and

modern, that will in any way strengthen and support their faith in this direction and to this end. In other words, they are establishing their faith by a desire and they endeavor to bring into effect all forms of proof to support it. While the Materialist brings up his evidence first, examines them critically to ascertain their soundness, after which his attention is directed to the facts they reveal, and he at once brings himself to accept the truths they teach, fearless of any consequence.

Thus we see that the Materialist must be of scientific turn of mind. And like all scientists he must be above all, honest. Honest with himself and honest with all others. Through his entire course of research, whatever branch of the subject may occupy his attention, the predominating influence that shall aid him to arrive at a suitable conclusion, and the true character of the subject must be simple facts, unadulterated truth, and substantial realities. Then unalloyed deductions will be the result. The Materialist must search everywhere for scientific principals and he will be rewarded with profound views and sincere conceptions.

At this point he begins to see things through a different lense, the light of a new reason then dawns upon him, and he is presented with a new intellectual efficiency. Questions occur to him of eminent importance, like these—Could it be possible that children, or any one else, should be taught to believe in religious doctrines that are not true? Is it possible that teaching to any one a false religious faith or any other form of falsehood, could be right or just? or calculated to impart to the student any good? If a teacher knew there was a heaven and taught there was no such place, would he be doing right? Then

if he taught there was a heaven, when in fact, he really knew nothing about it, would he be doing right? If a person has been proven to be a falsifier, or a book that has been proven to contain falsehoods, can any assurance be placed in any statements they reveal, if they cannot verify their statements?

If a scientist makes a discovery that he has proven to be true by a series of equitable calculations. Could there be any harm in investigating his deductions with a view of establishing the truth? And if these discoveries seem to disprove the teachings of the church could the scientist who collected them be considered dishonest?

When scientists' attention is directed to religious subjects, another series of questions are ushered before his critical observation, like these—If the teachings of Mohammedanism are entirely right in the eyes of the Lord, can the teaching of Christianity be wholly right? Then if the teaching of Mormonism is right, can those of Catholicism be corrected? If Unitarianism is the direct and perfect standard of truth, can Methodistism be accepted as a true and righteous interpretation of the divine law?

And so the inquirer might lead himself through the whole category of religious denominations. At the close of such investigation he would find that not one of them would concede that any of the rest were wholly right in their teachings. However, each one will contend that they are the only true church of the living God. Yet there is supposed to be but one God, hence only one true church. And the question naturally arises, which is the true church? Each can produce the same amount of traditional history as any of the rest to prove they are the true church. Though not one of the whole number

can produce the slightest tangible evidence, or one scientific reason, in support of their claim. Each denomination claims all the others are ignorant. Ignorant of what? Their conception of traditional history. But this only shows the unfirmness of traditional history as no two scholars can by its teaching come to the same understanding.

Not only do discordant views arise, but profound enmity and even bitter warfare have been the direct result of misinterpretation and misunderstanding of ancient religious traditions.

Yet our scientist goes on, using only facts in evidence. He arranges these in a way that will give to them the most possible potency and honest authoritativeness, and the result they seem to establish is the one he is forced to accept as being the true condition. If his deductions disprove the contentions of religious tradition, he is condemned by those who think they have faith in any of the religious cults.

But should he be condemned for seeking the truth? And when he is convinced of facts that disprove all religious doctrines, is he doing wrong? When any person refuses to believe a fact that is thus proven to be true, is he doing right? Or if he is afraid to acknowledge his convictions in such a fact for reverential reasons, and therefore, condemns those who do accept the knowledge, is he doing right?

Leaving these questions to the discretion of the reader, the title of this book will be introduced at this point, viz. *Has Man an Immortal Soul?* Such a theory is extremely general. However, if we are closely guided in our research by the foregoing principals, which are calculated to deliver to us the

truth only, we will find there exists no proof whatever to verify such claim.

Science has searched. Scholars have meditated, but to no avail. There appears to be no philosophical reason for believing that man possesses such auxiliary. All theories of the immortal man teach us that the so-called soul is a spirituality. Such an explanation comes of necessity, for the reason it is easily demonstrated that every particle of the material body can be effectually destroyed by different processes. It is claimed by some that material bodies cannot be destroyed, that they continue to exist, in some elementary form. Which is true. Though it is a fact the original body can be destroyed, for example: we look upon the perfectly organized engine, palpitating under its load, generating power from its fuel. It is perfect in every detail of its mechanical construction. Now let us place this beautiful piece of mechanism in a crucible, then watch the transformation from mechanical organism to inert mass. (And the same demonstration would be possible with the human body). We have before us an object lesson of immense importance, demonstrating beyond doubt, that all material organism is destructible. However, we are told by those who pretend to know, that the soul cannot be destroyed, that it lives on and on through a considerable time, apart from the material body, hence, we are to believe it is a spirituality and possesses or contains no material in any form. Is it possible to conceive what is meant by a spirit? Let us see; if it contains no material whatever, it would be boundless, for boundary lines are always material. Then it could have no form, shape or size. Not composed of material it would

be transparent and invisible. Without matter it would motionless. For motion means the changing position of material bodies. And we see that the soul as a spirit, could not move apart from the body for there is nothing to move. In short, it would seem that the human soul has all the requirements of being what we would understand as nothing. If we can form a conception of nothing, then we may have some idea of the composition of the soul. But this is an impossibility and for this reason we can not conscientiously concede that the soul does exist without the body.

But the devoted religious person will attest the simple fact that so many do believe in the existence of the soul is positive proof within itself that the soul is a reality. Though we should remember man's "believer" is a very queer thing for it believes many things that will not bear probing, in fact it persists in believing some things long after the bottom has been probed out of them.

Some advocates of the soul theory have suggested the soul may be possessed of qualities through forces unknown to us, in which they are enabled to realize, and in which they are made to have sensations similar to the mortal man. This might be so, but as we have no knowledge whatever of such being the case, the conjecture is left outside the scope of reason. Such a suggestion is only the result of unguarded imagination and there could be no reason for giving it serious consideration.

Why should man possess a soul? If we bring to bear all the forces of our intelligence upon these sizeless, colorless, motionless, unseen, unheard and unfelt conjectures the question will appear what enjoyment could they derive from their existence?

It is plain they could not converse through the audible language, for we know it is necessary to have material vocal organs, teeth, tongue and pallet, to say nothing of the lungs, diaphragm and other muscular arrangements to produce the necessary sound waves. It is likewise necessary to have the material ear drum, rods and cone, to receive the sound waves. It would be equally difficult for them to use the dumb language, for they do not have material hands with which to signal or eyes to see the signs. Most of all the spirit does not possess a material brain dynamo in which intelligence could be generated.

These are some of the reasons that Materialists are unable to believe that man possesses a soul apart from the body. But they have many other reasons for rejecting that belief. Materialists like scientific demonstrations where it is possible to obtain them. Therefore they have carried out a series of experiments which have great bearing on the subject and which produces evidence to support their theory.

Before endeavoring to explain such experiments it will be necessary for the reader to have some scientific conception of what is understood by the human soul. If a scientist were asked to give his intuition of the soul he would say: It is the spark of life controlled by the thoughts. At any rate, if the soul does exist it must be alive and it must be capable of thinking. This is evident from the fact that a dead or thoughtless soul could result in no importance.

Assuming the question has been correctly answered, we are placed in a position to carry out the experiment. In the first place it is evident that the

material brain is the complete basis and directly responsible for mental activities in all animals including man. This evidential fact is ascertained by observing the gradual development of the intellect of the young with the growth and development of the brain matter which increases with the advance of age. And also the decay of the intellect which always accompanies decay or degeneration in activities of the brain matter which comes in extreme old age or disease. We also observe the total inactivity of the mental forces with total impairment or destruction of the brain.

Then to prove the conjunction of the brain matter and the intelligence. That one can not survive without the other, the following demonstrations have been scientifically observed. That whenever sufficient pressure has been applied upon the gray matter of the brain, come-stupor is invariably the result caused by arresting the interchangeable action of this matter which brings about the condition that makes thought vibrations possible. The patient lies in a deep sleep, the spark of life has lost its luster. In this state the brain matter is inactive, consequently no mental force is possible. If the foreign pressure is removed, before the pendulum of the bodily organs ceases to swing, the interchangeable action within the brain may be restored and the normal mental condition regained. But if the organs of the body lose their interchanging action, those of the brain cannot be restored and death ensues. Showing that the organs of the brain are dependent upon the organs of the body, and vice-versa. It also shows that all intellectual activities are indirectly dependent upon the organs of the body. Without the body the brain cannot live and

without the brain the intellect cannot live. Thus we are forced to believe that the spark of life, the thoughts or as we may term it, the spiritual soul can be, and is effectually destroyed or discontinued when the brain matter is destroyed or disorganized.

And we are led to believe the phenomena called the soul, is in fact simply a condition brought about by the interchangeable action of matter comprising the animal organism, and can be compared to the light of a candle which is also a condition brought about by the interchanging action of numerous elements, part of which are atmospheric, the others contained in combustible materials, these interchanging chemical actions are rapidly taking place, producing light and heat vibrations. This condition is a phenomena and of no less magnitude than the phenomena of life.

When this condition called light, is arrested from any cause, such as snuffing out the candle, the condition referred to ceases. It does not go on in some unseen form, it simply quits its existence.

Whatever constitutes the spiritual soul, it seems it is necessary to create a material body in order to create a soul. At least we hear nothing about spiritual souls having their origin without a material body in which to dwell, this being the case it would appear the soul is dependent upon the body for its origin, therefore dependent also for its existence.

Some ecclesiastical philosophers have, for want of something tangible to compare the soul with, likened it to the electrical current. While these currents or volts are not perceptible to the sense of sight, they are realized by the sense of touch. Others have likened the reality of the soul to light; again we note that light is perceptible to the sense of

vision, but is not realized by the sense of touch. And as the soul cannot be either seen or touched, there cannot be a comparison in this way. Yet, if we consider the spark of life the soul, they can all be compared from the materialistic angle, for they are all the result of materialistic energy, without which none of them would have their being.

Every animal and reptile, every serpent, insect and fowl, have the same spark of life that man boasts of. No matter how far down the scale of life and intelligence they may be, they have every requirement that man possesses to indicate that he has an immortal soul.

The theory that man is not an animal is exploded by the science of physiology and comparative anatomy, which teaches us that all animals including man, are conceived from a similar embryo and protoplasm, which are the primary and fundamental basis of physical life. The lower animals are constructed of the same material and tissues as man, bone, sinew, flesh and horn. All of them have practically the same physical organs as does man. Their blood is the same and performs the same functions. They inhale the same air with the same lungs, and for the same reason that man does. The animal digestive tract and assimilation is identical with that of man. They are subject to many of the same ailments and disease, some of which are transmissible to man. While most drugs have the same physical effect upon animals as they do upon the human system.

Many of the lower animals are endowed with some of the human emotions, love, hate, fear, mirth, jealousy, etc. All animals are also endowed with the same physical senses as man, seeing, feeling, hear-

ing, tasting and smelling. They are subject to mental and physical fatigue from which they require rest through repose and sleep.

After a careful comparison of man with the lower animals, it is extremely difficult to see in what way there is any vast difference. Further comparison will reveal the fact that there is far more remote similarity between the ape and the dog, than there is between the ape and man.

If man had been the result of long premeditated design on the part of the Creator to fill the requirements of God's most infinite understanding of what an absolutely perfect mortal being should be; a mortal that should bear the immortal, that is to live through eternity to glorify him, why should he fashion this especially elevated being so very near in comparison with the ordinary beasts of burden? In fact it seems it must have been the intention of the Creator to make of man a beast of burden, for he is constructed to perform all manner of labor and in most cases is compelled, by necessity to and appointed by nature, to carry on laborious pursuits. Nature gave to man absolutely no advantages over the lower animals. It will be argued that man was endowed with superior intelligence. But it is quite questionable whether the original human beings were in advance intellectually, to the other animals that inhabited their immediate time and territory.

The intellectual development of man, opens the greatest question that has confronted modern Materialists. viz: Why and by what means has man's intellect developed to a point so far beyond that of the lower animals?

At first glance this question seems to defy all the

most careful calculations accessible to science, until the right thread of reasoning is discovered. Then it is, we are enabled to trace, with minute accuracy, each progressive footstep in the evolution of human intelligence.

In this line of investigation there is one preliminary key to the problem, that when understood will make clear many of the mysteries which has baffled the lay mind for centuries. Whatever development man has made, intellectually, must be accounted for directly and wholly, to the invention of the language. Through the use of the language it was made possible for them to transmit to each other new ideas and discoveries. The older generations were able to transmit to their children, the things they had learned by experience, this of course saved time, and made it easier for the younger generation to gain new knowledge to add to that taught to them by their parents. In more modern times, the language has made it possible to store up knowledge through written records for future use. Giving to each generation great advantage over their predecessors.

The invention of the language brought about another important influence in the development of man's intellect, making it possible to establish the principal of fusion of thoughts and ideas. The fusion of minds, has long been recognized by scientists, as the one thing that has evolved the intelligence of the human race so far beyond that of the lower animals.

This principle is very perceptible when we observe two scientists, students of the same subject, at work in their laboratory. They are co-operating for the purpose of fathoming some problem. The

first scientist advances his discoveries and ideas pertaining to the subject, which may be entirely new to the second scientist, and the thought fusion, occurring here, bring about new ideas. New avenues of thought are opened, often resulting in the immediate and correct solution of the problem that might otherwise have remained in the realm of mystery.

It is this principal of interfusion of minds, that is the direct cause of the solving of most of our problematical questions both simple and complex. It is this incorporation of discoveries, that has made possible the rapid strides in the field of invention. We see this plainly illustrated when, after years of work, an inventor turns out a piece of machinery that he considers perfect in every detail. Yet ere long, another inventor sees where some part could be improved, then some one else improves another part, and in a very short period of time, the original machine is obsolete.

It is through the medium of the language that interchanging ideas were made possible, in fact, we are enabled to trace every phase of human advancement, directly to the use of the language. This is evident, for if man had had no language he would have been a dumb animal, plain and simple, and would have possessed no more intellectual capacity than the lower animal at this time.

Theologians will claim the language was a gift from the Creator at the time of man's origin. This is an impossible situation to have existed, for the reason we can trace the continual development of the language from an extremely remote time, which would indicate that this development has been going on through continual transformation for untold

centuries, and that it evolved from the most meagre language, composed of simple sounds and signs. And as ancient man was primitive in every other respect, it remains only logical, to disregard the claim that he had a complete and efficient language at the beginning of his career on earth.

Then if we examine some of the facts we have learned through the researches made by anthropologists and archaeologists, we will find these two branches of science gives us some idea of the arts and customs of primitive man, indicating the state of his mind to have been in the very lowest possible condition, at his first appearance upon the geographical landscape. Archaeology leads us backwards through the iron, copper and bronze ages, and then still further backwards, through the three progressive stone ages. These different ages are named after the material used by those ancient men in the construction of their implements, in the period in which they lived. Therefore, the most ancient stone age is marked by the most primitive stone axes, and also indicates the most antiquated period in which the human being is discernible.

These fossils are associated with the skeleton of most primitive man and the extinct cave bear. And are found at the bottom of prehistoric, drifts and caves, in different parts of Europe. These most ancient axes are simply pieces of stone that have been broken from the larger rocks, irregular in shape and size and evincing no particular design, except a sharp edge that it might be used as a weapon. These weapons were evidently, man's first attempt to use an implement to defend himself against the ravages of the wild beasts and to aid

him in conquering his prey, and show the very first step toward intellectual development.

At this point looking backwards, biology takes up the thread of investigation. She has swept the preceding centuries in an effort to fathom the mysteries surrounding the origin of animated beings. Biology endeavors to trace organic life backwards through great periods of time, to an age when such life was in the form of the moneron, which dimly explained, is an animal organism so far down the scale of life, as to possess no physical organs.

If we are desirous of looking further into this interesting subject, it will be necessary for us to rely upon the most powerful and modern microscopes, which reveal the fact that all animal and plant bodies are originated primarily, and individually, with what is known to biology as the single cell. These extremely minute portions are so tiny that until the advent of the microscope, they were wholly unknown. So small are they that many thousands of them are required to produce even the smallest portion of tissue, that can be seen with the naked eye. Yet under these great microscopes they are discerned to be separate, living particles of animal or plant life. A curious feature of these cells is that they are almost identical, in all animals as well as all plants. It being difficult to discern the difference between the single cells of the ox, and those of the lily, as they vary only slightly in shape and activity. This variation seems to be the dividing line which signifies the variety or family of living matter to which it belongs.

These minute elementary units are more or less independent of each other, all capable of multiplying. All parts of the body are composed of them, the

bark, wood, leaves and roots, are composed of these little vesicles which have a striking similarity to the cellular structures that make up the composition of bone, flesh, blood and horny substances of the animal organism.

It has been established that the ovum of animals is a single cell and when it begins to develop to form the embryo, it first simply divides into two halves, thus producing two distinct cells. Each of these in turn, divide, giving four new cells, by this repeated process of division there arises a solid mass of cells, held together with cohesive substances.

Of course they must be nourished to promote growth. Meanwhile the whole animal or plant body is formed out of these rapidly, dividing and developing masses of cells. And as the different parts of the body are formed out of these minute cells, they begin to take on different degrees of density, according to the density of the structure they are to form.

If we wish to approach the frontier of wisdom on this subject, and we ask the biologist to describe the single cell. He will tell us it is composed of a granular substance covered with a membrane, both of which are more or less complex and dense, according to the tissue they are to build. Then recently with the aid of the most improved microscopes, there has been discovered in each of these single cells a tiny germ or nucleus and when these germs are properly fertilized, they throw out two thread like fibres in opposite directions, which in turn, begin the formation of a new germ at their extremities. These new germs are fed upon the body of the original germ until it is absorbed, at which time, the two new germs are full grown, when the old casing

being swollen, begins to divide thus two new single cells are matured.

It must be remembered that this dividing process is carried on very rapidly, only a few minutes are required for the full development of new cells. This process is continued throughout the entire lifetime of the animal or plant. The dead or worn out, particles of the old cells are thrown off from the body, while new ones are constantly being formed to replace them.

This little single cell has given scientists more reason to believe that all animals including man, originated from a common cause and beginning, than any other observation. And we shall see that man's existence upon the earth today, in his present high state of development, is the result of necessity and not design.

Though, just how the first form of life as a single cell originated, is not definitely known. Yet it is well defined that all living things can be definitely traced to the single cell. And that each species of animals have evolved from a lower type, is beyond question. Then following this line of evolutionary descent that is inevitable, we have no reason to doubt that the process has been going on, through countless ages, numbered in fact, by millions of years, if not millions of centuries.

And as it is only possible to trace the race of mankind so short a distance back into the dim past, compared to the immense lapse of time, necessary to bring him from a lower species, up to the period we can trace him back to. It is plain, there could be no remains of the pregenerated, species preceding man. Therefore, we can only surmise that if a scientist of today, could see one of those pregener-

ates, he would compare it with the apes and monkeys.

This is not saying that it was an ape or monkey, for such a statement could have no positive reason for its assertion, because as formerly stated, there is not a vestige of remains from which to form an opinion of the pre-human being.

If this chain of descent could be connected as most scientists are satisfied—not only lies within the bounds of reason—but is altogether probable, than it would not be a difficult matter to trace all forms of animal life to a common source.

At this time, there is no scientific evidence supporting a belief in spontaneous origin of any form of life. Yet the geological and atmospheric, conditions, might have been such, at some far remote period of the earth's life time, that these conditions did exist and that life was really produced spontaneously. This is not only possible but highly probable, and it is likely under those conditions, life was produced through the medium of the single cell, which evolved into myriads of different forms of animated organisms. These would be reduced to a desirable verity and quantity by the laws of "survival of the fittest". This suggestion is offered only as a possibility, but does not carry with it enough weight to justify it as a theory.

We have biologically, traced life backwards, from the first stone age. Now let us start at that period and trace it forward. While we examine the implements of the second stone age. It will be seen the people made considerable advancement from the first period. From the fact, these stone axes were better made in every way, they were more uniform and polished to some extent. While the third stone

age shows greater development and progress. These tools were carefully hewed from stone and bore fairly good cutting edges, they were neatly fashioned and highly polished, while carvings decorated their surfaces.

The iron, copper and bronze ages record the further process in the progress of primitive man. Showing to us, the sturdy march of progression of those days, as we see it going on before our eyes today.

The progress of primitive man was not thought to have been very rapid, in fact it is evident that it was very slow. Archaeologists have estimated the time of the first stone age to date back at least thirty-seven thousand years. And his line of descent is traceable, in a way, therefrom down through the ages, bringing it nearer and nearer to the time our ancestry can be traced back to.

After a careful consideration of the foregoing summaries, it would appear that we have ample reason for believing that mankind, evolved from an animal in no way higher than the so-called lower animal. And that he had little or no language at the time of the first stone age.

The language, being in no way different from other human achievements, evidently has gone through a continual course of improvement. This we are certain of, for vast improvements have been made in the language within our own epoch. It is interesting to note, that with the improvement of the language, just that fast, the general condition of the people have advanced and improved.

If the language had been a gift at creation as orthodoxy suggest it to have been, it would have been perfect from the beginning as orthodoxy

agrees it was. Therefore, man would have always been in a perfect state of civilization, for any race with a perfect language is perfectly civilized, this is evident from the fact that scientific terms are of no use to any but those of scientific mind. Thus we are forced to the conclusion, he who wrote the orthodox contentions, did not have a correct understanding of the origin of man.

Evolutionary principles are responsible for whatever improvement the language has made, as these principles are responsible for every other phase of human advancement and development, as well as those made by the animal and plant kingdoms. In fact evolutionary principles are evident on every hand, steadfastly guiding the course, of every thing upon the earth. The earth itself, the whole material universe, suns and stars, it is ever at work, never a moment lost, all things are brought through immeasurable time and innumerable changes, to their present form through its influence. Its entire energy is exerted toward the development of all things.

While evolution is at this time, one of the so-called natural laws every influence that it appears to exhibit, can be directly traced to the cause of necessity. The first principles of the language was the outcome of necessity and each improvement thereof has only come when necessity demanded it.

CHAPTER II.

Why the invention of the theory of the Soul?

At what time was it invented, and who was the inventor? To answer these questions intelligently it will be necessary for the reader to turn the hands of time backwards, until he arrives at the dawn of civilization. At that time the masses of the people were very ignorant, there being a few among them who possessed superior intelligence, living far in advance of their time, just as we see a few, of the more intelligent of our present generation. These few were capable of peering into the future and predicting the necessities that awaited the progress of civilization.

As has been the case in all generations, these more enlightened individuals were selected as leaders or teachers of the masses, it was evident it was necessary for these leaders to gain control of the masses. Therefore it was necessary for them to formulate some plan by which their subjects could be kept in subjection. They could not do this by force of arms, for the masses were too greatly in the majority, they could not threaten them with physical or mental punishment for the same reason. But if civilization was to progress, it was certainly necessary that they have some simple rules or laws that all would have to abide by.

At this time another natural law came to the surface, and was plainly viewed by those leaders, this was the law of "survival of the fittest," while a branch of the law of evolution, yet does not seem to fit well into the process of civilization, in this

particular the rules of civilization have transgressed the laws of nature, to a considerable degree, claiming that all men were created equal and should remain the same. Yet those people were adherent to the law of "survival of the fittest" in that they selected the smartest men of their tribes and races as rulers.

It is evident the masses were strongly endowed with the principles of "survival of the fittest" and were intent on carrying out their rights under those principles, making it extremely difficult for the rulers to enforce the new laws, laid down by the founders of civilization. It is to be assumed that all resources were exhausted before necessity, the "mother of invention" appeared with a new scheme.

They could not punish the massive numbers of transgressors of the new law here, but could punish them hereafter.

It was at this time the character of the immortal soul began to take form. Its description would indicate that it was a spiritual being that dwelt in the body during the lifetime of every individual, but left the body at the time of death. This so-called soul was said to be indestructible and capable of living on and on throughout eternity. It was claimed the soul possessed the senses of the body, that it could suffer pain and anguish. It was also said to be capable of being happy and experiencing enjoyments under favorable and blissful circumstances.

It is not probable that the crude theory of a hereafter life, originated at this time, for it seems to be a fact that so far as it is possible to retrace the dim past, mankind seems to have had some faint idea that he would live on after death. Theologians have

used this argument as strong evidence supporting their claim of the reality of the soul and hereafter life.

On the other hand, if we will retrace the annals of history and tradition, then on to prehistoric time, and from there let our mental forces penetrate the mist on and on, letting our imagination depict primitive man at the time when his mind first emerged from the intelligence of the lower animal, when his first mental forces were awarded the possibility of deductions, his mind then opened to avenues of reason.

It was at this time he first came to realize that he would some day have to meet death. Then the question came to him, why was he created to live so short a time? In this anxious inquiry his life became miserable, but in time, relief came to him in the thought that it was possible he might live on some how, some where, again after death. And while the tangled threads of reason forming themselves in his mentality, in an endeavor to unravel this Skein of mystery, this simple conjecture was transformed into a firm belief in a hereafter life. Though he could have had no theory or idea as to how the miracle was to be performed, for it is not reasonable to suppose that man at such a primitive stage could be capable of forming anything like a theory on a subject that has staggered the imaginative faculties of every generation following him. Moreover, when we examine all the different phases of the different religious doctrines, one predominating precept is seen to stand out more prominent than all the rest. It is the ever holding before the people the assurance that the soul is in constant danger of perditional punishment, and for only the slightest

offense. Showing this to be the main object of the claims of the existence of the soul. It then seems probable that the faint idea conceived by the stone age dweller, was simply a coincidence, and not a supernatural inspiration. His power of reason could have given to him no other conception of a hereafter life, different in any way, than that which he had experienced. A conception of Heaven or Hell was entirely out of his reach and unnecessary in his mode of living.

Having invented an immortal soul for man, for the specific purpose of punishing it, after death of the material body, it became necessary to find some form of punishment. This was not difficult, it was an easy matter to describe a pit into which the transgressors soul should be hurled. Why a pit? Those people of the semi-civilized ages, had a great horror of being thrown into a pit, probably because pits had been used among their tribes to dispose of their undesirable members. This particular pit was bottomless, which added to its horror, and it was filled with fire which should burn for ever and ever. (It appears the more modern conception has transformed this place of torture into a lake fire.)

However its description was calculated to impart to the people the most terrible destruction possible for the mind of primitive man to conceive. If he had known of any thing more terrible he certainly would have added it. It would be almost impossible for a modern scientist to formulate from the whole category of chemical knowledge, a more frightful termination for objective man. This infernal region was termed Hell—translated.

Why was not Hell filled with corrosive chemicals instead of fire? The answer is clear, the inventor

of the theory of Hell knew nothing of such elements, while fire was well understood and was known to produce intense pain when applied to the flesh; therefore, it was not difficult to make the masses of the people understand the awfulness of being cast into such a place and burned for ever. They were taught they would suffer this unutterable punishment for the most frivolous offense, while in the flesh. Especially any dissension with the wise men—as those teachers were then called—even to doubting anything they saw fit to teach as divine truth, was an unforgivable sin that the soul must suffer for throughout eternity.

With the invention of Hell, it was very clear, it would be necessary to have an overseer to take charge and administer the awful fate, to the shrinking souls. He was described as being half man and half beast, with hideous horns and cloven hoofs and a forked tail. This being was supposed to be able to transform himself into almost any form of disguise, in this way the people could not recognize him and they would not know at what moment he might nab them, if they were not living the letter of the law.

He was also described as being a spirit, and standing at the elbow of everyone, at all times, while his overpowering influence was ever urging them to do wrong. This awful demon's name was Satan or Devil, and at the merest mention of his name every one would tremble with fear.

As time went on, of course the people became more intelligent, and questions sometimes arose in their minds, which when presented, had to be met by the wise men, for they were assumed to be all wise. One important question was: How was it possible to burn a spiritual soul in a material Hell?

This was a baffling question to be solved by the wise men, with limited resource of knowledge. As will be seen by the ensuing answer, which was as follows. At a certain time after the end of the world, there will be a day of resurrection, at this time all the particles of the material body will be gathered together, reorganized, and the soul will inhabit it again, and then the whole structure will be tossed into the fiery pit to remain alive, and sensible to its tortures, for ever and ever.

Just where the soul is from the time of death until the day of resurrection is not made clear, as no explanation is offered. The resurrection theory is handed to us as a concrete fact and with no question or resistance on the part of the average person. Such a deduction must have had its origin in the mind of a savage or barbarian, for there is absolutely nothing in science that would indicate that such a theory has a legitimate right to exist.

Many other questions came up, none of which were any more correctly answered. But the next important question in order was—if they were to be punished for sins done in the flesh, why should they not be rewarded for living the righteous life? This demand of the people brought about the necessity for the invention of a place where the soul could be delivered to rest in perfect ease, peace and happiness, a place where no pain or sorrow should enter, where perfect bliss should reign supreme and eternal. This place was (translated) Heaven, in name. That it is a material Heaven is evident, if we are to draw our conclusions from the only history we possess on the subject for this states the foundation of heaven is garnished with all manner of precious stones, sapphires, emeralds, etc. Heaven

is also described as having walls great and high built of jasper (quartz); the streets are made of pure gold, while the gates, twelve in number, are each single pearls. These are all material. There is nothing that could be designed as spiritual about Heaven.

With the idea of a material Heaven, as with a material Hell, it was necessary to entertain the resurrection myth, to associate the spiritual soul with the material Heaven. No attempt whatever has been made to locate Heaven or Hell. The fact that they are of material construction would lead us to believe that they must have a material base on which to stand. We are positive they do not stand upon the earth. Therefore, we have no scientific reason for believing that they exist at all. Tradition merely makes the statement that these two places, of after-life abode, exist in some mysterious way and place. But tradition also has made many claims that are completely exploded by scientific investigation, thus, we can place but little confidence in any statements she makes, that cannot be verified by more reliable authority.

As civilization progressed, man continually gained wisdom. Some began to think seriously, others were of philosophical turn of mind. Another great question presented itself, perhaps the greatest question that was ever cultured in the mind of man. This was the question of creation. By what force was creation of all things brought about? While this stupendous inquiry has, in a way, baffled the efforts of most modern scientists, who have attempted to fathom its mysteries, it was no effort for the so-called wise man of the earlier centuries, to satisfy the masses of the people by simply in-

venting a Deity. He was represented as being a man. This is evident from the fact, tradition tell us, he created man in his own image. Man was, of course, the highest type of being it was possible for the inventor to conceive.

This Deity or God was purported to be all wise and all powerful as well as all merciful. That is to say: He had full and minute control over every detail of the entire universe.

He was also supposed to be a spirit as in the case of Satan. God is alleged to be standing by the side of each and every one, noting every act and deed. Yet we must assume that he is a material God for the reason, he is reported to be in form, a man, and dwell in a material Heaven. Then tradition states that he was seen and heard, and only material beings can be seen or heard. It is also clear that a spiritual God could have no place in a material Heaven among material angels. (Note the resurrection.)

This is the God that was introduced by the ancient wise men to clear up the mystery surrounding the creation and control, life and destiny of the material universe. At the moment the wise man gave allegiance to his theory of an omnipotent God said, wise man was immediately transferred to another realm. He did not know all things as was formerly supposed, his word was no longer law, he began to lose prestige and in some cases lost favor. He was now only the servant of the infinite God.

These wise men did not relinquish their lordly positions out of any choice of their own. It was a demand upon them from the people, they wanted their instructions direct from the all wise God, but they were led to believe there were only a few indi-

viduals among them who were selected or ordained to act as intermediators between man and God. These men of God—as they were then called—were supposed to have revelations or audiences with God, in which they received from him, instructions for the guidance of the people.

Now the people of those days, like the people of the present time, tolerated this preposterous delusion, out of an intent desire for light on these subjects. Any semblance of an explanation for the mysteries surrounding the after life, and the necessary requirements to attain it, was eagerly received.

When the people of those days came to believe they could obtain the real truth regarding these matters, direct from God through the medium, they then and there demanded an explanation or creation. And if an all wise God had responded to a question assuming proportions of such momentousness, they might reasonably expect an explanation embodying voluminous magnitude, and eminently embracing profound intricacy. But not so, they received an answer so wanting significance, as to assure the Materialist that it was only the product of a primitive mind. The answer was as follows, God created the heavens and the earth, and every living creature. If an all wise God had responded to a request for an explanation of creation, he would doubtless have given a clear and intelligent description of the event. While the evidence, in fact, shows the answer given by the ancient wise man was only an effort on his part to evade the question, he really knew no more about than the most ignorant member of his tribe, he made no effort whatever to explain by what means or process God made the heavens and the earth.

An all wise God would have known of the intellectual ages to come, and he would have known that at that time this question would have to be scientifically and intelligently answered. And he would have offered some such solution as the modern scientists have done in presenting the nebulous theory which goes on to say, originally all suns were in a nebulous or ultra-gaseous state which was scattered pretty uniformly throughout space, that the matter composing the nebulae, gradually became condensed and finally began to gravitate toward certain centers. Though not all of these particles moved in the same direction or with the same velocity, thus rotation would be established in the entire mass, then spherical forms were produced, and by the force of friction, heat was produced. By radiation of heat the body condensed and contracted which causes the velocity of rotation to increase.

Then the centrifugal force overcomes the force of gravity and rings are thrown off. (The rings herein mentioned are the same as those now visible about the planet Saturn.) These rings gradually become globular, and are the beginning of a new planet, which revolve in an orbit around the center of mother body. Several of the rings might be cast off from one central body before it became too cool for the process to continue. The central body would then have a whole system of planets moving around it.

The immense velocity in rotation, produced by the force of friction, created tremendous heat in the centers, which heated space for millions of miles around them. In time the force of condensation was exhausted, by reason of the body becoming solidified, and then the force of friction and gravity caused the

speed of rotation to slacken, consequentially cooling of the celestial body began. By this progressive course the crust of the earth was formed. And so on.

However, the ancient wise men did not offer any such solution; they evaded the interrogative entirely by making the simple statement—God made it. Such an answer might be expected to evolve from a child mind, but it is too simple and does not answer the question. However unsatisfactory the answer was, the people were compelled to accept it as divine truth, because for only disbelief they were held face to face with the eternal punishment of Hell.

It might be argued the reason these questions were not more plainly and scientifically explained, as well as truthfully met, was on account of the ignorance of the masses; they could not have understood. Be it remembered, those answers were final; no further explanation was to be given. They were intended to apply to those generations no more than all generations to follow. Then tradition tells us that man's mind was clear from beginning; under those conditions he would have been able to comprehend scientific deductions at that time, could he have received them.

While it is true the vade explanation of creation as given by traditional authority is apparently satisfying to a large percentage of the people at the present time, yet the scholars and thinkers are rejecting the statements of the ancient philosopher as erroneous and incompetent.

With the present rapid advancement of the masses it seems certain the time will come when the doctrines of the ancient and ignorant wise men will be looked upon in the same light that we are viewing the fables of ancient ghosts and goblins. It was not

difficult to abstract these myths from the minds of rather ignorant people, for it was an easy matter to prove their inexistence by simple, but scientific demonstrations, that none could doubt.

And so it will eventually be with the ancient myths giving rise to the theory of the soul, Heaven and Hell. Science has lined up a chain of undoubtable evidence to prove the fallacy of those myths, which will be freely dispensed when the masses are ready for the question and capable of receiving the answer.

The legend of the immortal soul will be exploded. The dispersion of the ecclesiastical Heaven and Hell fables is certain. Moreover, the theory of the man God, together with his satanic majesty, will be dispelled, as will be the poetic fiction of the fanciful Christ.

Why should Materialism make these predictions? Why should not the world go on intoxicated and enraptured in these mythological superstitions? Why is not mankind better off under these conditions, though they may be false, than he would be were he in full possession of the truth regarding the genesis of his race, as well as the termination?

There can be but one answer to these questions, which is expressed in these few words: Civilization, science and education can never hope to attain their highest pinnacle of perfection until all mythological fallacy and superstitious doctrines are erased from the tablets of research, and only the absolute and strictest truth is sought, and attained, to a point where there can be no further argument or dissension.

Sublime faith in myth does not brighten the intellect, but breeds ignorance. And ignorance is not likely to form an impartial estimate. A false reli-

gious impression is too apt to become a settled fact, then when a scientific searchlight is turned upon it and its claims refuted, those who have been misguided by its teachings are wrought with rage, and their minds are not applicable to reason.

Proper conceptions of ideal purity have been stunted by pretext religious faith. Unfettered reason must have liberty to investigate data and credentials of religious doctrines, for theology is essentially an unprogressive study, as it does not permit of ruthless, scientific investigation. It is plain that if the first principles of religion are not divine, the fact will sooner or later assert itself, and the structure is sure to fall. Therefore, why should we try to disguise untruths by discouraging investigation, and so assist in retarding intellectual development?

Many facts in history have proven that erroneous religious ideas have effectually retarded progress of civilization. It was not theology that uncovered proofs of evolution. It was by no efforts of the church that the rudimentary, astronomical calculations were devised. Ecclesiasts did not propound geological deductions. Piety did not furnish the groundstone of biology.

Through all preceding centuries of civilization religion has laid her restraining hand on all speculations pertaining to natural science. Theology and the church did not consider the facts disclosed by science disproved their doctrine. On the contrary, claimed that the mere fact that their findings were contrary to the teachings of the church, disproved them and were evidence enough that they were malicious falsehoods, intended for no other purpose than to dethrone God.

Magnus, together with many other promising sci-

entists of the middle ages, was forced to abandon his researches and avow his convictions to the claims of theology, who claimed all destructive, natural phenomena, such as wind, lightning, storms and earthquakes, etc., were under the directing finger of God, and their destroying influences were administered as a rebuke for the sins of the people. But about 1750 Franklin discovered electricity and invented the lightning rod, thereby limiting its havoc, which religious prayer had failed to do.

As late as the seventeenth century chemistry was considered one of the devilish arts. In 1624 the Parliament of Paris prohibited its study in colleges. At that time deadly gasses and poisons were believed to be agents of the devil, but as soon as the science of chemistry was permitted to take its course they were discovered to be of material aid to human welfare.

Until a very late period sickness and disease were considered by the church to be agencies of the evil spirit and were combatted with prayer and intercession of the saints. But with the advent of chemistry and therapeutics, most poison elements, supposed to have been placed on earth by Satan, were discovered to possess medical properties, that when understood and properly administered, were extremely potent in arresting the course of human ills.

The early church even prohibited the practice of surgery, believing it to be sinful and against the will of God. Yet both medicine and surgery have asserted themselves through scientific indulgence in a way that disproves the former assertions and contentions of the Christian church.

These, together with many other examples, will clearly show that the early church practiced its malefactions and misguiding theories against the prog-

ress of civilization, and that under such misguidance human progress was actually retarded for hundreds of years. Yet the church of today is teaching many of the time-worn superstitions and fallacies, and pretend to prove their truthfulness by assuming the scriptures to be divine.

Falsehoods cannot be transformed into truths by teaching them to our children in the name of the Lord. Because those same falsehoods were taught to us in infancy, does not make them any better food for the brains of our infants. They only dull the intellect by placing the individual in a state of mind which prevents him from welcoming the true character of these subjects when they are presented to him for consideration. No people can become large mentally with the mind fettered with the fiction of an ignorant age. The weak and plastic mind of a child is easily molded in any form; it will receive impressions that will, under ordinary circumstances, remain sacred throughout its entire lifetime. It makes no difference whether these impressions are facts or fiction, they will have their lasting effect.

If the child is taught to believe all the Bible fallacies are divine truth, and that he should abhor and shun any and all information that tends to contradict the sacred scriptural doctrines, and is matured under these influences, he will never experience a state of mind in which he can throw off the yoke of the fictitious belief. Therefore, he will make little or no advancement in intellectuality. While, on the other hand, if he has been taught to accept no theory that is not supported by reasonable proof, his mind will always be in a susceptible condition to receive the new and good intellectual substances as they present themselves.

With so many different forms of religion in the world, including all of the many oriental religions, together with the hundreds of different so-called Christian religions, and cults without number, all of which are based on about the same line of traditional authority, there can be no harmony. Each all right in their own estimation and all wrong in the estimation of all the rest. Each presenting their own ideas of the redemption of the immortal soul, which are at the most only flimsy and imaginary fancies. Yet they all claim the same tradition gives them reason for their existence and disproves the claims of the others.

What facts science has established are immovable and it is this kind of knowledge we should seek. Although all substantial facts cannot be established at once. But the sooner scholars begin to unravel mysteries from the scientific end, the sooner intellectuality will mount the summit of infinite wisdom.

None of the religious sects are asking men to seek the scientific truth concerning their doctrines, but are holding before them their particular superstitious dogmas, none of which can give any assurance of authentic reliability. In fact nothing more than a few chapters of questionable tradition are offered to offset the world of contradictory, scientific knowledge.

Why does modern man adhere to religious faith as though it were a part of his very being? Where did such tendency derive its origin? Or, in other words, what is there in man's composition that seems to make religious faith necessary?

To obtain proper understanding of the qualified answer to this question, we should analyze the prime principle of human emotion. In this it will be neces-

sary to observe some of the natural sensations of man, which is a form of instinct. These may be observed only on rare occasions, such as when a person is suddenly and profoundly startled by an unrecognized sound or sight. At first he is held spell-bound with fright; this condition is caused by intensive concentration of the mind upon the cause; every muscle is held tense and beyond control. The individual stands in this rigid condition several seconds or until another form of instinct, which we recognize as curiosity, begins to have its effect.

The intense desire on the part of the individual to determine the cause has a tendency to bring the system out of this phenomenal spell and a normal mental activity is regained.

What do we learn from this observation? First: The animal fear so predominant in all animals in the wild state, is more or less prominent in man, which creates an intense desire to evade, or prepare, in every possible way for impending or possible harm. Thus we have the root of all religious preparation against desolation. Secondly: We perceive natural inquisitiveness, so potent in men of modern civilization, yet more or less perceptible in the primitive human race, and to some extent in the lower animals. And here we have the root of scientific investigation.

CHAPTER III.

We often hear the statement that religion has paved the way through all time for civilization. That it has gone with civilization cannot be denied. Yet religion cannot truthfully claim credit for lifting civilization to the high plane it now attains. For we have only to retrace a few short years of authentic history to find, preceding the sixteenth century, the people had religion in its most vivid form. What progress did civilization make during those ages of religious domination? The facts are, it made little or no progress; intellectuality stood almost still during this time.

It was not until modern science dawned upon the world that intellectuality and civilization started on their onward and upward course. While religion never aided science in any way, but battled with it at every place they came in contact, every fact brought to light through scientific research, that in any way disproved the teachings of the church, were at once put down by the authorities as heresy, the statements were audaciously criticised and the author was severely punished, even to life imprisonment, and in many instances they paid the death penalty.

An illustrious example is sighted when the father of astronomy, Galileo, at the age of seventy, was submitted to the tortures of the rack, from which he died in Rome in 1633. He was condemned to this fate by the judges, cardinals and prelates of the holy congregation, for having announced his discovery of the stationary position of the sun and the planetary movements of the earth.

There are those among the more devout at the

present time who think science is doing more harm than good, by reason of its continually uncovering facts that tend to refute some of the erroneous statements set forth by the Bible. They take the Bible to be the word of God, therefore the infallible truth. Another class are trying to inveigle themselves into thinking science is teaching the same facts as are taught by the Bible. This class have been convinced by scientific evidences, and are making a desperate attempt to make themselves believe it is supporting the Bible.

It is true that a person can be taught ignorance and may become very erudite in fallacy. Thus we see an ancient relic in the fear of Hell still manifesting itself among many at this time. They are casting asunder all scientific advantages, never daring to question the infallibility of the Bible, seeking no further information, satisfied with what they consider a declaration of divine truth.

Let us just examine the word truth. Many think that which they were taught in a religious way is the truth. Then that which is the truth to one person is not the truth to another person, according to what their earlier religious education has been, and the word loses its significance. If a Materialist were asked to define the word "truth" he would say, "It is the conclusion arrived at after all scientific investigation has been exhausted, or where a scientific demonstration can be made." Again, a scientific truth is a fact that never changes. Scientists have been accused of changing their deductions at times, which is very possible, but if they do it is because they did not have a complete conception of the subject. However, there is no proof that scientifically established truths ever change. For instance:

It has been demonstrated that fire burns; this is a scientific truth and will never change. Water quenches fire; this is another tested truth and cannot be doubted. These phenomenas are controlled by natuarl laws that never change their course; therefore the result never changes.

It is true that scientists are not always correct in their deductions; they only try to be correct; they seek the truth from facts in evidence. If the evidence is insufficient they are apt to blunder. If the evidence is sufficient or abundant, then he is reasonably certain of the ground on which he stands. If he is asked to explain the formation of the earth, he leads us through a course in astronomy, geology, mineralogy, chemistry, and physics. Each branch of science is fathomed; we are given no other proofs than those in evidence. When he has finished we have a clear understanding, based upon natural science and philosophical survey. While the man God theory of creation is based upon feeble tradition and insidious mythology.

Theology asserts God to be a monstrous man sitting upon a throne in an imaginary Heaven, which is situated in some obscure place. This was the conception of the would-be philosopher of remote civilized time. This God was simply a king. His inventor could conceive nothing more sublime, but he was an all-wise and all-powerful and all-merciful God. He was the designer of every phase of creation. Let us see if it is possible for one being to possess all the requirements assigned to the man God of ancient tradition.

If he is all wise, he is evidently aware of the impending disasters that are continually befalling man. If he is all powerful, it is, of course, within his power

to prevent them, and if he was all loving and merciful he certainly would prevent all such catastrophes. While the facts remain that calamities of every magnitude, of every degree of horror, always have been, and always will be, overtaking mankind along the road of experience, it is almost positive proof that no intelligent mind is presiding over them, or has any control in any way thereof.

If God has no control over such conditions, he has been misrepresented; he is not the all-powerful being he has been purported to be. If he is all merciful and has created all things in accordance with theory and design, how will it be explained that from the earliest life upon the globe the world has been a continuous scene of warfare? All the land and sea have been full of strife and battle for supremacy and existence. Many species are so constructed it is necessary for them to live upon the bodies of others. Thus cruelty is the general order of things. Did an all-merciful God design it?

Look at the small proportion of the human race born that reach maturity, and a much smaller proportion of the animal kingdom, especially those in the wild state. From millions of fish eggs produced only a few dozen fishes reach maturity. The main cause of destruction among wild animals, birds and fishes is the stronger ones, impelled by hunger, prey upon the weaker generations. Or, unable to obtain food, they are starved to death in immense numbers. Where is mercy and design manifested here?

Every animal and plant is the object of innumerable forms of insect and disease pests. The external body of every animal, including man, is the natural habitat of numerous species of parasite, flies, mosquitos, fleas and lice, etc. While micro-organisms

numbered by the dozens of varieties, live within the bodily tissues, all of which subsist by absorbing the juices of the body. Many are equipped by nature with appliances whereby they are enable to burrow themselves into any part of the animal body. And they are all made to "be fruitful and multiply" to an incredible degree. What shall we say of this order of things?

Let us examine the history of mankind during all his sojourn upon the earth. In his iniquity, through his ignorance, he suffered violent death in incalculable numbers, and for ages they were devoured by their own kind, as well as the wild beasts. While at the present time conditions little better prevail in some lands.

Then under the most favorable conditions which man can live, he suffers from a multitude of causes. Natural processes are often his worst enemies. Floods, drouths and all manner of insect, disease and weed pests, destroy his crops and rob him of his patient toil. Storms, earthquakes and volcanoes devastate his places of abode. Sudden changes of the weather occur, to which he is unable to adjust himself. Destructive contagion, from unknown sources, overtake him, destroy his health and shorten his years, thereby marring his peace. Would an all merciful God permit these spectacles of suffering to exist, when the simple exertion of his will would be sufficient to restore peace and happiness to every man and beast?

For no greater reason Materialists would reject the theory of divine design and turn with earnest recognition to the theory that teaches all forms of organized matter are the result of a series of evolutionary laws which embody blind force, the origin

of which is yet not fully understood, each of which are in turn controlled or influenced by necessities which are unconscious of their own existence.

That these many species of lower animated organism were constructed for the specific purpose of living upon the bodies of the higher order of animals, thereby continually tormenting them, and then to concede this to be the result of premeditated design on the part of the creator, is charging up to his account one of the most stupendous acts of cruelty ever perpetrated. Or will we have to reconstruct our deductions to the effect that the higher order of animals, as we understand them, were created for the benefit of these degraded creatures, incapable of the first principles of thought? Or shall we conclude God is not all wise? Or perhaps his deficiency lies in his inability to be all powerful. In any case he certainly does not manifest all the acquirements assigned to him by traditional authority.

When we travel over the vast areas of the unpopulated districts which are uninhabitable from different causes, we are impressed with spectacles that everywhere present indications that a vast amount of energy has been wasted. Great areas are incumbered with stupendous and shapeless mountains forming appalling canyons overhung with rocky ledges, holding forth dangerous abysses to receive either animal or man in their deadly grasp should any chance to pass their crests. These represent to all appearances wasted efforts on the part of the creator if their creation was intelligently designed, for they are worthless, worthless in the greatest significance of the term, as they produce nothing of beneficial consequence to the earthly inhabitants.

Then we are confronted with wide portions of the

earth's surface occupied with swamps and marshes. These sections present only dejected aspects, they bring forth no fruit of whatever nature and show only another evidence that intelligence was not employed with their creation. Then with many thousands of square miles of advantageously located and appropriately designed portions of the arid districts, fertile in the extreme and applicable under the hand of man's dominion to the needs of agriculture in all its phases, had the creator finished his work and permitted the heavens to furnish sufficient moisture. After supplying ever other element nature demands, these semi-deserts are hopelessly barren only for the want of water.

Did the creator intend these sections to be utilized for any purpose? Or did he think they could be used without water? Or were they constructed without design? Is it possible tradition is right in asserting they are the result of infallible design? Shall we confess ignorance of the intent of the creator? and will such understanding satisfy the critical inquiry of intelligent thinkers of today? Whatever conjectures we may decide to make, there is only one solution. We must confess there was no intelligence evinced, and these apparent mistakes of nature are in fact results of "cause and effect" of natural laws, governed by no intelligence whatever, brought about, out of necessity alone, couched in no intentions and subject to no apology, for they are accountable in no degree. Such a solution would be the only barrier of contempt. If this be the result of our calculation, as it appears it must be, then we are forced to believe the so-called God is really of little consequence, or, what is more likely, he does not exist at all. We are also compelled to suggest that theism is unable to ex-

plain on what grounds she bases her theory of divine design.

Without divine design the theory of a life beyond is refuted and the inevitable question then arises, why should man, with all his intelligence, be so suddenly brought to an end? Indeed, why should so much accumulated intelligence perish? If we could but comprehend nature's intricate phases of discipline and order, we would be rewarded with understanding.

To our meagre conception of nature's dealing and intent, she seems to be unjust, unfair and cruel in many ways, if not in all calenders of her processes. These spectacles of unfairness are brought to our perception on every hand. The most beautiful structures man's brain and hand have been able to fashion have been laid waste with a single tremor of the earth's surface, while others entirely escape. Immense numbers of people have been annihilated by natural causes, their lives and property are devastated by storms, earthquakes, volcanoes and tidal waves, while many others under similar conditions are not so menaced. Two men are placed in battle line, one is immediately killed, while the other serves on indefinitely uninjured. These appear to present injustice. But we perceive nature in her infinite silence does not explain. This we know: the uplift of one species necessitates the downfall of some other; in other words, nature's process of construction necessarily promotes decay.

When we study creative principles of life from scientific angles, we are impressed with the fact that theism is directly the reverse to science. The former gradually recedes as the latter advances. The one building argument today and discarding them to-

morrow, while scientific deductions withstand any scrutiny and all tests.

There cannot be two ways by which creation was accomplished. There can be but one correct way of explaining the mystery. The one explanation is the miraculous creation. And as miracles do not exist, science cannot accept it. Miracles are supposed to be feats performed by a power beyond the ordinary agency of natural laws. Materialists reject this theory, because they have no reason for accepting it. They study nature with impartial vision. They see and recognize disorder, discord and gloom, as well as beauty, order and cheer. If one is the handiwork of an intelligent creator, worked out through his order and design, then the other must be charged to him. If he created a beautiful child, he also created many varieties of disease germs which must have been designed to cause the child pain, misery and despair. For all animated life is a process and must be taken as a whole if we are to understand how any one species came into existence.

If all creation was the work following design, it must have begun somewhere and thus must necessarily end somewhere. The latter does not concern us so much in the present investigation. But the beginning of creation is extremely interesting and vitally important if we are to arrive at an understanding that will satisfy the philosophical mind.

When we find the work of a people, we look for the workmen who fashioned the work. After finding them, we inquire after their maker. The first answer to this inquiry was, God made them. After hearing of God, we feel a moral right as scientists and seekers of truth and knowledge to ask if he was the beginning of creation? Where did God derive

his origin? How long did he live before he created the earth? It would be interesting, indeed, to know how long he reigned before there was any material substance to reign over.

Science has found natural causes for different effects, and if it was necessary for nature to put forth some creative efforts to produce a snail, it was certainly necessary for her to put forth some effort to create a God. Or is it possible that so important a personage could have come into existence by no efforts from any source? We are told these are old and ridiculous questions, yet they call for sincere reason. And it was theology that made them ridiculous.

It is now conceded by theologists that the genesis day was in reality thousands of years in length, though the bible emphatically stated the evening and the morning was the day. However it claims God made the heavens and the earth on the first day and also the light which was divided from the darkness. We feel impressed with inquisitiveness and would like to ask what this light was? for the sun was not created until the fourth day or period, and all the light we are familiar with is derived, directly or indirectly, from the sun. And we are to understand the earth is many millions of years older than the sun. Such calculations are reverse from scientific deductions, which teaches the sun is the center or mother of all the planets.

Genesis informs us that on the third day the earth was made to produce all kinds of vegetation and fruit trees. This evidently took place thousands of years before there was any sun. Then the same authority says God rested from all his work on the seventh day, which he made holy. From this we are

to infer all things stood still for thousands of years or during this period of holy rest.

Thus theology has given her version of creation. But theology presents only a medley of confusion and uncertainty and their teaching should be placed in the museum of recollections.

When we turn to physics, chemistry and biology for an explanation of creation, we see the theistic views exploded. These sciences emphatically demonstrate, therefore truthfully reveal, that there are more than seventy different species of atoms, each holding different qualities, and that all forms of matter are formed from them. These minute particles of matter are collected by certain forces into larger bodies of matter, as, for instance, fine sand by the forces of heat and pressure are formed into larger stones. In the case of organic bodies, by the force of adhesion, the single cells are brought together to form a larger mass of living matter. Thus the process of reformation of matter is continually going on, and all forms of material bodies are directly traceable to the atoms of the elements of which it is composed.

The course of evolution by which the stellar system is formed is so incomprehensibly slow that no imagination could depict an intelligent, thinking creator who could be satisfied with such procedure. And as these systems are now in the midst of their maturing processes, and we see no creative design manifested, we feel confident that none exists.

The apparent precise order of these stellar systems is by some considered reason for belief in a creative mind, but these systems are said to be controlled by natural laws; yet natural laws are not designed and it is not the law that controls the body.

Let us not misunderstand the meaning and character of this form of natural law. The planetary bodies have certain movements; these movements are the result of necessity, they always act the same way, as far as we are able to discern, and we call those actions laws. In fact those movements are not set, they are continually changing, but this change, like all evolutionary efforts, are so slow that we are hardly able to detect the change. These bodies are simply floating in space the same as a wooden ball might float on water; they obey no set law. How would a star recognize or obey a law? They take the easiest course, or where the least resistance occurs. Natural law does not mean violent force, we might more correctly say it is lack of force, or it is persuasion through the lack of resistance. Thus we see the principle of "least resistance", though it could not be called law, is the true controlling influence of planetary movements. And we see the reason our earth is revolving around the sun, in an apparent exact course, is because it was the easiest course, or where the least resistance occurs, and, as there is nothing to stop it, it continues. But why did it start on this particular course? We are told by astronomers it is attraction of other and larger bodies that influence it. And so attraction appears to be a true natural law, but is explained as mutual tendency or affinity which is in reality electro-magnetism and is no property of a peculiar or mysterious nature. Therefore we see the movements of the celestial bodies are not controlled by design, as design was not necessary or possible.

However, these movements have been so persistent and perpetual that they have brought about other

propensities which act upon minor objects, governing them in a multitude of ways, and these governing influences are the true natural laws, and these natural laws are the outcome of necessity. The whole organic creation is, as well as every movement of each atom, taking place by reason of necessity. Every movement of every planetary body is the result of cause and effect. When our hemisphere is turned away from the direct rays of the sun, caused by the earth's movement, heat is reduced and cold ensues of necessity. By reason of cold, frigid zones are the result, and an immense amount of ice is formed. Then the effect is reversed when another movement of the earth brings these districts under the more direct rays of the sun again. These changes are the result of necessity. Volcanoes become active by reason of what is known as volcanic energy. This is brought about by the cooling of the crust of the earth, shrinking down upon the molten center, making it necessary for it to form vent holes. These would of course be formed where the least resistance occurred, or where the thinner or weaker sections of the crust lies. And in past ages, when the whole crust was thinner than it is now, great breaches were made in the crust in the shape of fissures many miles in length, and great upheavals of the crust then formed the mountains as we see them now. It is also plain these results or effects were brought about by causes, not designed, but necessary.

The general movement, through evolutionary principles, toward improvement of every living thing upon the earth, is brought about by necessity. The most primitive man lived individually, as do many wild beasts now. It was evidently necessary for him to do so at the time he lived. But changes came that

made it necessary for them to form into clusters or tribes. Under these conditions they made more progress, and under these circumstances it became necessary for the communities to have some form of government. Then civilization began, of which every phase has come into effect as necessity demands.

As man migrated to the colder climate, it was necessary that he should adapt clothing and houses to protect him from the cold, and all the other necessities of life were adapted as needs appeared. Then to say that a designing creator unfolded nature to meet the requirements of man will meet with many obstacles, for it is clear that all evolutionary changes, which usually result in the betterment of species by adaptation, are brought about by necessity.

It would even be possible to make a direct demonstration of this fact by placing a number of common cattle on an island on which grew trees bearing leaves of a nutritious character, and which was the only food. It is evident that the longer-necked animals would live longer than the short-necked ones, by reason of being able to reach higher to gather the food. Then, as "like begets like," the long-necked animals would bear young with long necks, the longest of which, in turn, would be able to live longest, and so on through many generations, at the end of which, if we were to visit the island, we would doubtless be surprised to find the original cattle had disappeared and what would appear to be another species of animals, with giraffe-like necks and front legs, had invaded the island. This principle is known as "survival of the fittest". It is one phase

of the evolutionary process. It is in every case the result of necessity, which reverses the theory of design.

Biologists are sometimes asked the question: If there is no designer, how comes there to be so many different species of animal life, all of which are perfect specimens? The answer is: All animals have been brought to their present state of perfection by the slow and deliberate process of evolution. And it is plain, as each step in advancement puts in its appearance, it becomes more or less fixed. This is a plain proposition, for it is easy to see that an animal with feet could survive where others without feet would perish. Therefore the former would breed offsprings with feet and for a much longer time than those without units of locomotion, with the result, at this time all animals have feet.

Others have said, the fact that animals are furnished with eyes before they are born, and before they have seen the light, is evidence that they were designed by an intelligent creator. Let us see if this is the case. It is certain that those animals that first possessed some mode of sight could survive those that had no organs of vision. Because the animal with eyes could find food and refuge, which enabled them to live on for a much longer time and produce offspring in much greater numbers, which would, of course, have eyes, as like begets like. And it would follow that those that had the best eyes and feet would outlive those possessed of poorer ones.

Thus through this inevitable process of evolution the organs of all animals and man were brought to their present state of perfection. Yet we see no indication of, and no reason for, the designing hand of God.

CHAPTER IV.

The question of prayer has always held the assiduous application of those who believe in the existence of a man God. They feel that their whole happiness and welfare depends upon these exercises, however there is no binding proof that God ever directly answered a single prayer. Yet it has been demonstrated innumerable times that prayers are not answered.

Some desires and achievements, asked for in prayer, have been attained. But how do we know they would not have been attained if no prayer had been issued? The same good achievements are gained by those who never pray as are accomplished by the praying element of the most devout. Explained thus: When people pray they ask for that which the heart most desires, consequently every other effort is put forth to attain that particular desire, therefore, if it is possible, it is very apt to be gained, and the prayer is said to have been answered. But the same efforts brought to bear in this direction would doubtless have accomplished the same result.

Theologians tell us, he whose prayers are not accompanied with material efforts on the part of the individual will achieve nothing. This statement is evidently true, and he might have advanced truth further in saying: he who pauses in his material efforts to pray is losing time.

Scores of pathetic prayers have been asked daily that are never answered. Any of us can call to mind devout religious characters who have continually

worshipped God, daily praying to him to bless them, and who have suffered unutterable pain and distress, and have finally been awarded most horrible death. Again we see mothers nursing their dying child and offering a continual prayer that the child be spared to them, but with no result. The child is lost and the mother is bent in mourning for the remainder of her life. Whereas she had a moral right to expect God to answer her whole-soul prayer. Who would not loose faith?

If God is deliberately rejecting such prayers, he is not the good God we are expected to adore and worship. And prayer avails nothing more than the personal satisfaction the participator derives from such indulgence. There seems to be abundant evidence to prove that God is limiting his kindness to the human race, permitting undue suffering to encroach upon all mankind. Therefore we are further forced to the belief the man God theory is of no benefit to us. If so, why should we not dispel it entirely and return to the only equitable theory which teaches all things are governed or controlled by natural laws which are the result of senseless forces? And the nearer we keep our movements in accordance with them the better results we may expect to enjoy.

If we are desirous of a demonstration as to the effect of prayer we may direct our attention to the enactment of such demonstrations which we can see continually going on about us. One person may grovel in the dust of his closet, rendering the most devout prayers it is possible for the mind of man to construct, while another may seek the highest pinnacle from which he may blaspheme God with all zeal. Whereupon it will be found, under close ob-

servation, that neither of them will have been able to change the course of any formative principles in the slightest portion of a degree. Materialists hold the very strong opinion that in either case only a waste of energy is possible.

Every form of material motion is operating under the direct and absolute influence of natural laws. If any certain effect is desired, these activities must be concentrated or brought into operation in a way that will cause the desired effect, which can only be done by material action. While natural laws cannot be changed, they can be somewhat modified, that is to say, their course can be in some instances diverted. For example, we see the mighty locomotive, designed by the mind of man and built by his hand; we watch it as it dashes with fiery fierceness along its iron trail. Through all of its intricate detail of construction, every portion is operating exactly within accordance of natural laws. The tattered fragments of a wrecked bridge may be waiting silently beyond. Yet the monstrous overland ship is plunging blindly on, carrying its human cargo to awful agony or instant death. No prayer from a mother's heart or other human emotions of whatever character can stem the monster machine from carrying out its mission of destruction. Only by the material hand of the operator on the throttle can an overwhelming disaster be averted. Thus we find the action of natural law upon material activities can be varied only by the interference of other material actions. This is a necessary situation, for if material activities could be changed in the least by prayer, natural law would shortly lose control over all the universe and disorder would thereafter reign.

Those who are satisfied in the belief that the Bible

answers all questions correctly are of course letting the matter rest. They manifest no desire or courage to look further into the subject with a view of broadening their knowledge. Such people are usually of the opinion that no one else has a moral right to inquire into religious matters from a scientific point of view. They imagine such inquiry to be extremely sinful.

While it is possible for us to train ourselves to think we believe the fiction of ancient mythology is holding all knowledge of religious nature, it is also possible to cultivate a desire to acquire all available wisdom leading up to a true and perfect knowledge of the circumstances and conditions concerning all things. If we are to be broad, we cannot be narrow. We must inquire into each side of every question and weigh every grain of evidence with honesty and reason.

Then we will observe the church is not practicing this mode of investigation. It prohibits its colleagues from probing the authority of their doctrine from rational angles. Thus the church is doing more harm than good from an educational standpoint. In this way it is at this time doing everything in its power to retard intellectual development. It is dwarfing the minds of its followers by educating them from infancy to grovel in fear and trembling in a belief the truthfulness of which they have not the slightest proof.

It is true some churches will tolerate scientific investigation of certain subjects as long as they are able to construe the resulting hypothesis to coordinate the holdings and contentions of their doctrines. But the moment instigations of researches are begun that will in any way tend to overthrow

the teaching of the church, all friendly relations between religion and science is severed, and the clergy are very exhaustive in the expression of their chagrin.

They are holding before the people the Bible as the wholly and divine truth, of whose pages should never be scanned with questioning attitude. They would have us believe the Bible was given to us in its present form, self pronouncing, red lettered and morrocco bound, while the truth is, it was not compiled and arranged in its present form until the year sixteen eleven, or about three hundred years ago. Then it has undergone several minor revisions since the King James version of the above date. Up until that time all biblical records were in a fragmental form, presenting disconnected narratives, and a considerable portion was without proper meaning. These fragments were derived from several different sources, thus they were conflicting in a great measure. Then much of its original substance was traditional until a late date, while that portion that bears evidence of being written memorials was only copies of former manuscripts that were in turn copies of still older ones. The oldest of these manuscripts now in existence bears date of nine hundred sixteen A. D., and as their method of preserving documents was certainly far less effectual prior to that time, this manuscript would doubtless have to be placed far down the line of re-editions.

At the time the King James version was edited, it became plain these ancient narratives would necessarily have to present a connection that would show a continuous form, and as sufficient material was not available, it became evident the commission in charge would then be forced to assume a goodly quantity to attain this end. It is plain these assump-

tions would be largely visionary, and influenced in no small degree by the conscience of the commission in charge, therefore of no value historically.

Let us give a little attention to the authority of the history of the Bible. The judicial faculty has to determine several questions as follows: How far are the sources to be relied on? Are they to be relied on at all? This depends on the ability and willingness of the writer to tell the truth. Was he in a position to know all the facts? How far can his judgment and penetration be relied on? He may have been endowed with party affiliations in a way that it would be impossible for him to record a perfectly unbiased and impartial opinion. In fact the chronicles of Eusebius (one of the foremost fathers of church history) writing about 324 A. D., are noteworthy impaired in value by the author's avowed resolution to record only that which would reflect honor on the church. Thus we see a writer may be perfectly able to tell the truth and he may be in possession of the facts, but he may not desire to record them as he sees them. He may have motives of his own or of his party for withholding a part of the truth, or even substituting untruths.

The writers of what is now the Bible records did not know they were writing that which was to be a Bible; had they known this they doubtless would have been more careful as to their text. However, at the time these writings were made they were intended to have more of a political influence than religious, thus they would naturally take on a spurious infection.

The original copies of these records were doubtless written on papyrus rolls, but these were so soon worn out by frequent use that we do not now possess

any historical notice of their existence. All of these works were printed by hand in "unical" or large capital letters without division of words or punctuation. They were necessarily often copied, and an important feature is noticed here in the variation that in time crept into the text. Many of these variations were mere slip of eye, ear or understanding of the copyist. But nevertheless they are dangerously misleading if it is facts the inquirer is demanding.

During the earlier centuries copies of these works must have been very rare, having by necessity been printed by the slow and laborious method then in vogue. Printing by hand was the only process of making records until the invention of the running hand which was in the ninth century. Then the invention of the printing press which event dates back about the middle of the fifteenth century, but did not come into general use until much later. Under these conditions it will be seen any historical events recorded at that time and by those methods must be held in a suspicious light. In using these ancient manuscripts and documents it was necessary for the more modern historian to be able to judge exactly as to how far the statements therein recorded could be relied on if they were to arrive at the facts. This, it is clear, would be utterly impossible. Then these historians were forced to omit those parts that seemed inconsistent and were likewise forced to insert paragraphs where it seemed necessary to make it conform with meaning and reason, to some extent.

The writers of the gospels were, according to their own statements, disciples in the faith of which they were recording the essential occurrences, and it would be no more than natural for them to record

nothing that would be detrimental to their doctrine and belief. While on the other hand it is certain they would exert every effort to make memorandum of any occurrence that would further their cause, as they thought. There can be but little question but these writers were influenced by their surroundings in a way that would make it impossible for them to record an account that would hold the entire truth only.

The man who holds the conception of the Bible as being a complete, perfect and flawless revelation of divine truth from beginning, will, on close reflection, discover that an infallible Bible is an impossible conception, for the reason the original writers would have to be infallibly informed as to the truth. They would have to be able to express it in infallible language. Their manuscript would have to be infallibly preserved, translated and copied. All their statements would have to carry infallible evidences. The writers would have to be infallible themselves, and we would have to be infallible, and possess infallible understanding. Nothing less than this combination would give us such conception.

That this whole conjecture of infallible divine truth is only pretence is seen when we note, after the reformation, as the battle between the Roman Catholic and protestant churches went on, the protestant theologians, for polemical reasons, laid more and more stress on the theory of the divinity of the scriptures and the authority of their church. Then the idea of infallible inspiration crept into their doctrine and finally came the claim that these scriptures were absolute and infallible authority on all subjects.

Again, we notice the entire code of biblical state-

ments have been forced to run the gauntlet of a censor down through all the scores of generations, which doubtless remoulded and reconstructed their teachings to fit the different times and conditions. Science has rent the Bible doctrines to such an extent that it has received unmerciful mitigation of authority. And the whole interpretation has been reformed in an attempt to co-ordinate its teachings with those of modern science. For example, according to the Bible the world was created in only six days of manual labor on the part of the creator. This is a Bible statement and concrete in character. But after science proved the world was millions of years in creative formation, then the meaning of the Bible on this point was reinterpreted to mean six periods of time of no particular duration each. Even the theory of evolution is conceded, by some theists, as being God's plan, though the Bible specifically stated God created all things in their present perfect state. Many of the fabulous assertions related therein could only excite the disgust of any one capable of concentrating their mind on the subject long enough to form an opinion. So it became necessary to warp and twist the meaning of these narratives in an effort to form something of value out of their meaningless recitals.

Each theologian studies these peculiar Biblical stories and finally fancies he has discovered the author's meaning, then proclaims to the world that he has been divinely ordained to interpret the message. His interpretation may be diametrically reverse to those of some other theologian. Yet they are both certain they are right and the other is mistaken, therefore they are both satisfied in their delusion. Each is handing to us their conflicting doctrines, and

we are advised and expected by each to receive and accept them as divine truth.

The claim made that the Bible is well authenticated by reason of its having stood the test for a considerable length of time is no proof within itself that it is the inspired word of God unadulterated. For there are other books that have stood the test for nearly as great a length of time, among which is the Koran (the Mohammedan Bible). This book has the reputation of being the most widely read book ever written, and is at this time devoutly worshipped by a hundred million people. Notwithstanding these facts, the devotees of the Christian religions are ardent in their criticisms of the Koran, with prejudicial commentations. Then it is plain they do not consider the Koran is any more divine by reason of having stood the test of a long period of time. Thus we are to conclude that because an untruth has been nursed for several hundred or thousand years does not make it any more tolerable when it is proven to be false.

When a scientist has discovered he has made a mistake, he loses no time in discarding all appending calculations, for there could be no object or benefit in retaining them. For it is truth he is seeking, and a mistake or untruth has no place in his store of knowledge. He has no pet theories to defend with falsehoods and no apologies to make for his findings.

The Biblical prophecies and their assumed fulfillments are considered by many as being positive proof of the truthfulness of these writings. Some religious organizations go so far as to claim all of these prophecies are fulfilled, which is an indication that we are living in the last days. This theme they

derive from statements to that effect set forth in the scriptures, "The end is at hand". From this they infer the world will come to a sudden and abrupt end. However, this is an impossibility, for it is scientifically shown all celestial bodies are wending their way through the process necessity has provided for their origin, life and decay. Starting on their orbits in a similar condition we find our sun today a molten mass of gaseous material. Then on to a more mature stage as we see our brother planet Saturn, its surface probably crusted over yet tremendously hot. Then in the present condition of the earth designed as the life period. Thence on through a continual cooling process and finally the celestial death or cold eternal state. As we see our moon today, lifeless and non-rotating (evident from the fact that it shows only one face to us at all times). This complete process takes millions of years of time to complete, varying only according to the size of the planetary body. Knowing these are the true conditions and in accordance with natural processes that never change, there is absolutely no scientific reason for believing this course will be deviated from in regard to the earth.

When we examine the subject of prophesy we find all prophecies were put in a very flexible and applicable form, so that many occurrences could be construed to mean a fulfillment of a given prophecy. Again, any prophecy of long standing will witness occurrences that would seem to be a fulfillment. Another probability is that some of the prophecies were made after their fulfillment put in its appearance. Owing to the unstable condition of ancient traditional history, there seems to be no room to doubt the probability of this conjecture.

Whatever amount of weight has been placed upon the fulfillment of prophecy the fact remains most of the ancient prophecies are not prophecies at all. War and rumors of war could mean nothing, for the reason there has not been an hour of time during the process of civilization that there has not been wars or rumors of wars. Likewise, nations rising against nations and the famines and pestilences and earthquakes, as well as the false prophets, etc., are of continual occurrence ever since the dawn of history.

The prophecy "The end of the world is at hand" has been heralded to all people through all ages and has only had the specific effect of retarding civilization to a considerable degree by placing a good number of people in a state of mind in which they were unwilling to look forward to improvement, as the future held nothing to their minds but complete annihilation of all things. Thus it is clear that the man who made the prophecy that the world would be suddenly devastated by the hand of God has done untold damage to the process of civilization. All forms of prophecy are only another form of superstition, and it cannot be shown where they have been of any benefit to mankind in any way.

When we throw a modern searchlight of scientific investigation upon the writings of the Bible, a rather peculiar phase comes to view in the probable age of the different sections. The book of Genesis would testify to have its origin date to a very remote age. Its enigmas and tangles, its childish narratives and solutions would attest to having their origin in a very primitive mind. While some of the book of Exodus would seem to indicate its writers had lived in almost modern times, its code of modern laws

would seem to show it was the latest of Biblical writings. They could have had no use for many of those laws at the remote time assigned to this book. Such laws as are codified therein would necessitate a corps of modern peace officials and criminal lawyers to gather with modern courts of justice, of which there is no mention anywhere at this early date.

For the most part the Bible is the result of distorted imagination with no idea or intention of reaching a truthful objective. We see this most vividly brought out in the Book of Revelations. Its wild and weird fantasies, which only constitutes a nightmare of symbolic hallucination which seems to indicate it is a relic of ancient superstition that is throwing its rays from a very remote period. Yet it is assigned the position as the latest written portion of the Bible.

We are now absolutely positive the writer of the book of Genesis knew nothing of the formation of the earth, though he claimed to give an accurate account. He placed the chronological date of creation at four thousand years B. C., while scientific investigations have shown the necessity of its taking hundreds of millions of years of evolutionary forces to bring organized matter to its present form. He also made the same mistake when he stated man was created an adult in a few minutes, and his fall from grace. For as has been shown, man evolved from a being in no way above the wild beasts of the forest. His theory that God made all things off hand in a few minutes is successfully proven to be untrue, therefore it is certain the writers of the scriptures were mistaken in many if not all of their deductions

of problems they knew nothing about, though they seldom failed to make an attempt at an explanation.

The Bible is composed of concrete statements, purported to be the word of God. They are made in a way designed to lead the reader to believe the writer had a complete understanding and control of the subject. He also appeared to think the mere fact he was able to formulate such deductions was positive proof his solutions were correct, and the absolute limit of all knowledge on the subject. From this delusion comes the theory of divine inspiration. Such fallacy has been proven to have no foundation, by scientific evidences, in every instance where it is possible to bring such evidence to bear. Hence, if these ancient writers were given to making delusive statements under guise of divine revelation, it will be extremely difficult to determine where fiction leaves off and truth begins.

The clergy of today are holding, with absolute dependence, the discoveries in researches being carried out by certain members of their colleagues in which they endeavor to decipher the hieroglyphics of the ancient Greek scribes, contending these inscriptions found on ancient stone structure and obelisks that refer to religious doctrines testify to the truthfulness of the Bible.

Such ancient iscriptions are so meagre and untrustworthy they cannot be accepted with any degree of confidence. They represent many forms of languages or dialects, during many periods. Many abbreviations were used, causing difficulty in the interpretation, and again the hieroglyphics are often simplified in different ways and the original type ceases to be immediately recognized, thus skill in deciphering is limited.

These inscriptions are sometimes written in vertical columns and sometimes in horizontal lines, either of which may be read from one end or the other. To determine which way the engraver intended it to be read is another difficulty. One character may signify one sound or syllable or a whole word, or it may represent a whole sentence expressing an idea. The ideograph or picture writings are comparatively simple to translate so far as each symbol is concerned. Thus a picture of the sun might mean light, heat or division of time. But it is questionable as to just what the scribe intended to impart.

At any rate only slight profit is rendered by the interpretation of these ancient writings. This situation results from two causes. Firstly the interpreter would endeavor to make the hieroglyphics relate statements to support his theories. Secondly, if it were possible to read them and thus derive the intrinsic meaning of the author, we would have no knowledge that he was relating the truth.

CHAPTER V.

To the average Christian the Materialists' handling of the subject of the all-important character, Christ, will be of great interest, for in their judgment this is the one religious fact that now stands unchanged. They contend the proofs of his existence are so eminent that no authority is competent to refute them.

In the discussion of this subject let it be understood, we have to depend upon the writings of the gospels for all such proofs, for there is hardly a vestige of other history treating upon the life of Christ. Even these do not record a single movement of him from the time he was a child of twelve years of age until he was a man of thirty. A period of eighteen years. This is, to say the least, a very peculiar coincidence in the face of the fact he was known to be the messiah from birth. Why he should have been so completely lost to the world for this important period of his lifetime has not been satisfactorily explained. That he was kept in hiding to preserve his life from the ravages of jealous kings is unreasonable and without foundation. For if Christ had been sent by God to fulfill and carry out his plans there could have been no reason to permit or fear the destruction of Christ before his mission had been accomplished.

However, at this point in his life we find him a public teacher. He was teaching a new religion, the principal character of which was himself. He was posing as the messiah, whose coming had long been predicted and was much looked for about that time.

Under those conditions it will be understood the minds of the people were in a susceptible attitude to receive and accept this so-called and mysterious messiah, when they were reasonably convinced he had arrived. Yet in the light of these most conducive advantages and favorable circumstances, Christ was, according to the scriptural authority, unable to gain the confidence and admiration of the more intelligent people. His followers were, it is conceded, the most humble of their time. Though it is stated he appealed to all alike to accept him as the son of God and the direct intermediary between God and man.

His characteristics were identical with those of the traveling evangelists of the present time, who condemn in an unmerciful way, all who do not choose to accept every statement they make, and are desirous of sending them straightway to Hell. Many of Christ's statements were contrary to all reason, though he taught them as profound truths. All of his teachings are, by his followers, supposed to be the infallible utterances of the divine mind, though many of them have long since been scientifically proven to hold no truth.

It appeared that Christ was different from the modern evangelist only in the respect that he was his own authority. He produced nothing whatever to prove that he was the personage he claimed to be. He framed up any sort of theory to suit his fancy, then taught it as divine truth. In this last respect the modern evangelist is not unlike Christ, though he is enabled to use the elastic scriptures as proof of his fraudulent claims.

Such calculations have little effect upon the judicial reason of profound thinkers. Though these evangelists are always successful in gaining a follow-

ing of at least a faithful few, no matter how absurd their doctrine.

The extreme difficulty Christ experienced in convincing the more intelligent classes that his claims were legitimate, it would appear, led him to become much wroth and very severe with his condemnation of the authorities and officials of the country. Whereupon he was placed under arrest, given what would appear to be a fair trial in several courts; he was doubtless given every opportunity to prove his identity, which he failed to do, and was finally convicted of blasphemy and treason, for which he was condemned to be crucified. This was the penalty for such crimes at that time and place. At an appointed hour, according to tradition, he was led to a place just outside the walls of Jerusalem and executed according to law.

During the last moments of his life, while on the cross, were developed what is considered by many scholars as the most determining incidents of his whole life. It will be remembered the bystanders jeered and reviled him. They begged of him to descend from the cross; they desired this demonstration that they might be convinced of his divinity. This certainly would have been the opportune time to have shown his supremacy, had he possessed any. This was not an unreasonable request from the people, for it is evident that it would have been no difficult feat, had he been the powerful messiah he claimed to be.

There can be but little doubt that he would have complied with their request for a demonstration had it been possible for him to do so. To the Materialistic mind it is not strange that he did not make the demonstration, for it would have been contrary to

the laws of nature, which fact is always taken into consideration in the determining of any mysteries. Thus it is concluded that Christ had no more supreme power than any other man of his nation; that he was, in fact, in no way different from his fellow-men; that his supreme authority was only imaginary in his own mind and in the minds of his followers.

However, tradition tells us, at the ninth hour he cried out in a loud voice: "My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" And then yielded up the ghost. Why should these last words have been uttered? Did Christ lose faith in his father and in his own doctrine at the last moment? Vain attempts have been made to explain these occurrences as being in accordance with the will of God, or that such was to be; that prophecy should be fulfilled. But these are so feeble as to only put the whole matter in a more ridiculous light.

According to the best authorities, including theologians, the gospels were not put into written form until the latter part of the first century, while some scholars put the transaction at a much later date. However, it is plain the story of Christ was handed down for more than a hundred years, in a traditional form, to those who understand the meaning of this it would seem quite probable, whatever fact existed that led up to the narrative, were exaggerated to a significant degree. This condition is so highly probable, many of the most scholarly critics have completely rejected the whole narrative, refusing to believe Christ ever lived, except as a mythological ideal.

It is, of course, supposed Christ was sent to redeem the world from sin. Now the question is: What is sin? With scrutiny we are able to classify only two classes of sin, which are as follows: Transgres-

sion of natural laws, constituting the primary or original class of sin. While the other class is signified as the violation of human, or man-made laws. Then that which is considered sin, in the eyes of human laws is not always so considered by natural laws.

All natural laws and some human laws are classed by theologians as divine laws. Thus we see their confusion of the two, but with a little patience and a desire to do so, we will find no difficulty in drawing the line very accurately between the two classes of laws.

Natural laws are the governing influences laid down by natural forces, and recognized by the fact that they never change their course unless interrupted by some natural cause. In every case they were the result of necessity, as has been shown, and divine agencies were not necessary for their coming into effect. While human laws were designed in the mind of man they are in most cases brought about by necessity, yet they are constantly changing by alterations going on in their formulas.

Thus it will be seen acts that would be considered sinful by human laws at one time and place, are considered perfectly justifiable at another time or place.

Nature does not consider any act sinful that is not contrary to the natural laws, though they may be contrary to human laws. For example: She intended men to kill and devour each other. It was necessity that formed this practice, and we find man in his antiquity performing these atrocities. There we recognize the natural law of "survival of the fittest." This like all other natural laws will continue throughout all time. Though civilization has overcome it to some extent. In this way we are transgressing the

laws of nature, and we are paying the penalty for the sin by inheritance of all manner of disease. Had nature been permitted to take its course in this respect we would have, long since, been immune from all such disease, because they would have been stamped out by the diseased individuals not being permitted to live to carry the contagion on to others, and only the fittest physically and mentally being permitted to survive. Thus the race of mankind would have been far in advance in every respect under those circumstances than it now is.

Then we credit ourselves in having defied nature, changed her course and subduing her order. But when the earth becomes so thickly populated that room is at a premium, then it will be that the law of "survival of the fittest" will assert its rights and again its influence will be predominating.

The sin of transgression of human laws is well understood. The fact that they are continually changed to fit the emergencies as they appear is evidence they are not the result of divine design. If an all-wise God had designed them there could have been no reason for this evolutionary transformation, so evident in all of them.

There could have been no object in Christ coming on earth to save sinners. He could have done but little good. The whole scheme would have been wrong and against nature, for he could not change or improve natural laws. The human laws did not need his assistance, for the law of evolution of the intellect was bringing about a higher state of civilization at that time, as it is doing now. And it does not need the assistance of any evangelist whose business it is to preach a

fake religion with a Hell fire as a termination for all who refuse, or are unable to believe. Such doctrines only retard civilization by dwarfing the intellect.

Modern theorists do not believe Christ could have a mission of redeeming souls, for if man has no soul it cannot be redeemed, which would close the controversy.

It seems to be the general belief that we could not survive without Christ and the church. While it will be conceded morality should be taught publicly, there is no question but it could be done far more effectually through the channels of science than through the doctrines of a superstitious religion. The belief in superstition has never aided civilization morally or otherwise. * * * * *

If it is our lot to teach a child it is wrong to steal, we should begin by placing before him object lessons that he may see the real results of being honest. Show him the large estates and large business centers of the industrious and honest business men, their beautiful homes, where they are enabled to live in comfort and luxury. Then describe to him the horrors of the jails and penitentiaries. Try to infuse into his character a desire for the acquaintance and association of the better class of people, which means honest people, for a thoroughly honest man is a thoroughly good man. If there is any particular in which he is not good, it is because he is not honest in that distinction.

The child should be shown the advantages of education, show him the results of wasted opportunities, which usually lead to indolence and lawlessness. Teach him to be industrious and law abiding; this is an easy matter if his attention is called to the object lessons everywhere abounding. Show him that

idleness leads to ignorance, ignorance leads to degradation and sin—the stepping stones to the penitentiary or gallows. Teach him to shun and abhor the unscrupulous and the outlaw.

Why should you teach him to believe in a Heaven and Hell, where he will receive his reward or punishment, when you know nothing about it yourself and you cannot show them to him to prove your statement? Such have no more desired effect than the object lessons in everyday life, and certainly cannot make the impression on the child mind.

There is little doubt that the fear of Hell fire had the desired effect upon primitive man in forcing upon him his moral duties. But the same has little real terror for the present generation. It is almost impossible to find any one who has the slightest fear of going to Hell. Most people believe their enemies are going there, but haven't the slightest anxiety for their own welfare. This might be explained by their faith in some particular type of religion which promises their redemption with little effort. And we find it is difficult, probably for the same reason, to keep people out of Heaven. Though the Bible explicitly states, "Narrow is the way and few there be that find it." In the face of this discouraging outlook it is hard to find a person who is not perfectly satisfied with their chance of attaining the heavenly reward, regardless of whatever form of religious belief they are following. This is the result of each denomination deludingly claiming to be the true religion. And we see it is impossible to force morality upon the younger generations by holding before them the traditional myth of Hell and Heaven. If one form of religion will not redeem them in their mode of living another will. And they will experience no difficulty

in finding a religion that will exactly fit their requirements. It may not be your religion, or mine, but it is theirs because it just fits their idea of the perfect mode of life. They are, therefore, perfectly satisfied in their delusion, as we are, if we adhere to any of the denominations that teach us to believe the traditional myths.

When we take from the religious teachers these arms of defense, thereby depriving them of their mode of teaching morality, they will ask: "What are we to substitute it with? Is it possible there is another method that will answer the purpose as well?"

There is one influence that will serve the purpose to a far greater advantage than any combination of all others. This influence is public opinion. When public opinion regards an immoral act disrespectful or disgraceful, and places participants in such disrespectful or disgraceful light, then a long stride has been made in the betterment of moral conditions. In fact, it is this influence that is now at work, and is the prime factor of morality underlying religious methods. Tho it might be argued, primarily it is divine inspiration. But this solution could not be correct, for public opinion is more often incorrect in its decision of right and wrong than it is correct, as will be shown later.

The younger generation should be taught a clean and honored character is the highest possible form of nobility. Teach them honesty and truthfulness are the first requirements in the foundation of a great personality. Do not begin by forcing upon them fidelity in mythological beliefs that you will be unable to substantiate to their satisfaction, and that they can disprove the truthfulness thereof, with a

little sane calculation. Remember an untruth can do no good, no matter where it is placed, but will do much harm in the end. It is hard to dispose of, and the author would have been much farther advanced in a moral way, had it never been uttered.

It may be pointed out that public opinion has no terrors for some who have become hardened in wrongdoing. Then the criminal laws must take the matter in hand and deal with them as the case demands.

Public opinion is the most powerful medium in all human experience. It is this agent that has designed and formulated every phase of human law through all time. It has divided right from wrong for all nations and every tribe that has inhabited the earth. It does not follow that all decisions wrought by public opinion were unerring; far from it. This force is constantly changing; therefore, it loses its stability, in a sense. For what seems to be a perfectly legitimate transaction at one time or place is often transformed and appears to possess no moral excellence whatever at another time or place. It was not the character of the deed that changed, it was public sentiment that changed its views on the matter, placing the act in a different light. The progress of public opinion can be directly assigned to evolution of the intellect and results in all moral progress.

It is the constant changing of public sentiment that is the direct cause of the changes constantly taking place in the formulas of man-made laws. For instance, at a time not far remote, it was perfectly right and justifiable, according to the prevailing laws, to convict old and odd women without fair trial, as being witches and burn them at the stake. Many thousands of such victims were treated in this atro-

cious manner in Europe, mostly in France and Germany, during the sixteenth century, and at a time when the church possessed powerful influence, we see the church acting under the influence of public opinion in that respect, for the church sanctioned these barbarous customs. With further evolution of the intellect it became known witches did not exist; therefore, no one was accountable for the unexplainable occurrences hitherto attributed to these mythological beings. Thereafter the act of executing so-called witches was conceded to be wrong and sinful in the extreme.

Again: Within the recollection of our oldest inhabitants now living all kinds of intoxicating liquors were sold from every corner grocery to any man, woman or child. At that time this slack method of handling liquors was perfectly legitimate and lawful. But as public sentiment became wiser, this mode of handling so demoralizing an element was seen to be wrong. It became evident some method would have to be found whereby they could restrict the sale of these liquors. Whereupon new human laws came into effect which resulted in high license and local option. This served the purpose satisfactorily for a time, according to the dictation of public opinion.

It has recently been discovered by those of scientific intelligence that alcoholic liquors are of no benefit or service whatever to the human body, but are rather a menace in every sense. And at this time there are international prohibition movements worldwide. When popular opinion has reached a proper state in its course of evolutionary development there will be penalties sufficiently severe placed upon the act of manufacturing alcoholic liquors in any form; that they will be eradicated from the earth.

After the coming generations have no such temptations set before them and the human race has lost its taste and appetite for strong drinks there will then be no further demand for them.

It was not Christ's teachings or other phases of religion that told the people intoxicants were harmful to the human race, for these influences have existed for thousands of years and all during their free sale, under their influence the traffic flourished, as has many other forms of immorality and vice. People under no religious influence whatever, are taking affirmative action on the prohibition issue. As they are doing in all other such cases. Showing conclusively that it is intellectual development guided by the natural law of evolution, that is turning public opinion from the sanction of universal use of intoxicants to their moral condemnation. The fusion of ideas through the medium of the language has made the invention of new moral ideas just as possible as it does the invention of new and useful mechanical contrivances.

Theologians claim we are all unconsciously under religious influences, that God is ever guiding our thoughts and actions. While we are free moral agents, according to their idea, they believe God has control over all things and is guiding us to a better plane. Such a statement is not authoritative; we are influenced by the laws of public opinion, all good of which, religion claims the authorship. While that which appears to be wrong or sinful is attributed to Satan under that form of reasoning.

We see some customs that appear to be the work of religion at one time, and at another time the same custom appears to be the work of Satan. For acts that will admit us to a perfect moral and religious

standing today, will not admit us tomorrow. Then we must rely upon this powerful agent, popular sentiment, to guide our movements in the time in which we live. While it regards our actions as moral attainments, we are in a moral attitude. But when it decides these actions are immoral or wrong, then it will be necessary for us to conform our habits to those changes as they appear. For example: With those living among religious polygamists it is within the bounds of moral rights, for men to procure wives in plural numbers, while in other sects such attainments are considered one of the most abominable practices man can be guilty of.

Likewise, when one is among those religious sects who perform their manual labors during the so-called Sabbath, he may rest assured he will not be criticised if he indulges in like practice. Yet in other communities he could not expect to enjoy the respect of his fellowmen and continue this custom.

So it is plain it is no divine law laid down at the beginning or at the time of creation, that is stamping our actions as right or wrong. The changing of public opinion for the better, is the result of the dominating influence of evolution of the intellect. The church has never offered a benevolent or useful idea that would not have come to pass without its influence. For such improvements are invariably the outcome of necessity. If the creator had established such human laws as the church chooses to call divine laws, in the beginning, they would have been stable and never changing, for it would have been as easy for an all-wise and all-powerful creator to indicate right and wrong at the start, as to have a continual changing process leading up to the ideal moral state.

CHAPTER VI.

The claim that all good and moral attainments are the direct result of religious influence, is refuted by Materialism, which speaks from the depths of understanding. That much advancement has come along with religion is conceded. While on the other hand a great many advanced ideas have been propagated in the minds of people who are in no way under the influence of such doctrines. People who are mentally dwarfed by influence of religious superstitions, may be the source of good and moral ideas, but it does not follow that the same good things would not have occurred to them had they no religious convictions. There are good as well as evil morals among adherents of either of the question. This is admitted by all. And that any two persons do not see alike on religious questions is no indication of itself, that one is a better specimen of moral efficiency than the other. As has been shown, the fear of Hell has little effect, for all religions promise its evasion with little effort.

On the religious side we find untold numbers of different forms of religious beliefs. And it is impossible to find any two persons who can agree on all things pertaining to their doctrine, even though they belong to the same denomination. Little wonder then that there is so much discord in these circles. These conditions would not have been had it not been a human institution. There could have been no use for so many different religious organizations, for if the Creator had deemed it necessary for the people to adhere to a religious faith, there would

have been but one to indulge in, there would have been no use for more, in fact, two would have been too many for they could not agree which would cause unnecessary dissension. If there had been only one method of obedience and worship, towards God, and this form sublime then there would have been no question regarding religious worship for man to determine. Only one line of pious thought would have occupied the mind of all the people. Then all would have been righteous in the estimation of all the rest. Especially had this one religion adhered to the truth using only legitimate evidences on which to base their doctrines and permitted no false statements regarding creation to permeate their text. If they had only remained silent upon subjects they were unable to understand there would have been no room for Materialistic controversy. But this was not the case and it is for this reason that we have scrupulous misgivings as to the infallibility of the whole scheme.

Each religious sect takes a few verses from the Bible, from these they have formed the whole fabric of their devotional services, they are persistent in their contentions that these few instructions contain all the necessary obligations to insure their salvation. These people are satisfied to cast to the winds of disrepute the whole world of scientific knowledge. The few questions they are most interested in have been answered to their entire satisfaction. They have no idea whether the answer is right or wrong, they have no ambition or inclination to look further into the question. Generally the whole matter is left to the clergy (many of whom have little or no real faith in their teach-

ings) to dictate to them a form of submissive obligation to the church.

Then it is not strange that it is possible for these clergymen numbered by the hundreds of thousands, who are posing as instructors of divine truth, are enabled to hold with iron grip the reins of dominating influence over a considerable per cent of the people. A few of these men may be sincere in their belief that they have been divinely ordained to enter the vocation in the capacity of interpreter of scriptural principles. But the following truth will stand with no fear of contradiction, they cannot produce the slightest particle of tangible evidence to substantiate their claim. This fact doubtless convinces the majority of the ministry that their doctrines are shallow and weak, if not entirely false. However, it is evident they do not have the kind of affection for these claims they expect their followers to have, from the fact, only slight observation reveals many immoral crimes being committed by these men. They would not dare to indulge in such crime for reverential reasons, if they honored their religion. These crimes are seldom exposed by the church out of fear that the church will lose its dignity; every effort is made to screen the crime from public vision yet they occur in immense numbers. The clerical criminal does not fear eternal punishment, for according to his doctrine, he could not hide his shame and disgrace for God even though he was successful in keeping it from his congregation.

Submitting for consideration those ecclesiastics who for nearly twenty centuries have been credited with having divine power to forgive sins and save the soul from perdition through an alleged purifying

process in purgatory. Let it be said of these claims, as in all other such cases of assumed supernatural performances the faintest evidence of their reality does not exist. These reverential fathers have held with unabating grip the tyrannical rod of domination in their religious world. Their will has been the religious law in their realm since the beginning of the christian era and still holds sway over two hundred fifty million people at this hour. Their followers are not entrusted alone with their own thoughts on religious subjects. These so-called fathers are supposed to be equipped with very old traditional church records that are far more authentic than any others in existence, in these ancient and private instructions are contained the only really authentic transcriptions of holy tradition and is supposed by their followers to be the only positively secure process leading unto salvation. Yet it is a fact, tradition of whatever character, has only antiquity to recommend it. Untill such organizations are able to produce reasonable and reliable evidence of their authority, Materialists will be forced to place them along with all other assumed religious authority in the realm of superstition.

It is particularly astonishing to the cultivated reason, with what readiness the unscientific mind is adjusted to superstitious religious theories. Each religious structure has its following who stubbornly defend their theories, claiming all others are defective and fabulous in their formulas. They are usually so egotistical as to think all who do not ratify their ideas are devoid of reason even to a point of insanity. And the instigator of free thought ideas is at once characterized as a demon of the darkest dye. He is not worthy of their notice,

much less their association. This peculiar situation is the direct result of the conflict between Materialistic facts and religious fiction, yet the same conflict is going on between religious factions.

It is true some religious organizations will pretend to tolerate other religious doctrines out of courtesy, but below this courteousness there lies a fertile animosity pricked and spurred by ostensive jealousy.

We are often confronted with the assertion that all the great magistrates are religiously inclined, this apparent fact is used as another weighty evidence to prove the efficiency of religious influence. Whereas to the materialistic observer such claims carry no weight whatever, for the reason a considerable number of these men are known to be of materialistic turn of mind, although they feel it is to their interests to make no acknowledgement of such belief. Under these conditions the public would never know their real convictions. It is plain the reason they look upon this matter in this way, is because public opinion is at present upholding the fanciful and poetic legends which have come to us through tradition from an ancient and uncultivated age. While public sentiment gives preference of favor, to the church, public men who are dependent upon those votes for their instatement, can never give free expression of their convictions if they are not in sympathy with such doctrines.

However, it does not seem they should be called upon to uphold or approve doctrines set forth by any religious denomination or order, who, when asked to give proof to certify to the truthfulness of their statements, are desirous of casting upon the inquirer, the torments of damnation in Hell.

Then there are those among these men, as among all other classes, who are profoundly ignorant on psychological problems, they are unable to make empirical and scientific analysis of these subjects.

If a free thinker ventures to make assertions confirming his convictions he is at once, haughtily and pompously, demanded to give his reasons for disbelief in the "divine word." He is also demanded to give proof of every assertion he makes, while the faithful, have absolute assurance, from the clergy, that he will be unable to produce any evidence to prove his statements, and with the complete understanding, they will not accept it no matter how convincing the evidence might be.

To the Materialist it would appear, all religious doctrines are based upon imaginary theories, that have had their origin in the mind of dreamers. One of the most prominent of these theories, advances the idea that each person has an individual immortal spirit or soul, yet connected in some mysterious way, with all other such souls, then all in company, connected with the master spirit, whatever that might be, to which the individual souls are returned after death, providing their actions have been tolerable to the master spirit, while in the flesh. This theory may be good, but its reason is wanting. Just why this theory should have been devised, is very hard to understand if facts, were the object of the inquiry, for there is absolutely, not a grain of evidence on which to place a basis for such a theory. Though a great many people feel justified in claiming conviction to this theory. They endeavor to defend it by assuming, a supernatural being possessing the power to install in man, a soul, has the power to reclaim, and restore it to the master spirit after

death. They support this theory by sighting the physical phenomena which shows, all life to be dependent upon precedent life or that all animal organism is dependent for its being, upon parental descent. From this theory they try to show that man's body and soul came direct from God.

This supporting claim, in substance, is materialistic, for it is a scientific fact. But at this point their hypothesis loses the semblance of an important theory. For if the natural forces have the power to place upon the earth, an animated being such as man, and then incarnate in them a soul, these same forces have the power to extinguish it at the time of death. Thus we arrive right back at the original question: Is the soul reclaimed by a creator, or is it discontinued at death?

All claims of the existence of the soul after death, is based upon traditional history, which proves nothing more than does the savage's tradition bearing up his faith in a happy hunting ground. Of which, mention never fails to provoke a smile of disgust upon the countenance of any devotees of the so-called civilized religions. Yet the savage has the same number of qualifications for his belief as does the Christian.

It will be understood at the very remote time at which it is supposed, the original theory of a life after death, was originated there was no church and this theory did not constitute a religion. It was not until the earlier centuries of the Christian era, the church was formed. There was probably, but one church in the beginning. However, as the teachings of the church reached out over the surface of the then known world, taking up its abode in communities of wide separation, long periods of time

elapsed, with practically no communication, and the substance of the church doctrine naturally changed its form. Endless transformations took place, in a way that would conform its teachings, as is the case today, to the wants and wishes of the people and the teachers. These changes are the direct cause of so many different denominations. If the church had been of divine origin, so-called, these changes would have been, not only unnecessary but impossible. For as we are told, God's plans are always the same, then, now, and forever. Then with no modification of the church doctrines, there would have been but one church today. However, this fact is conceded by all the churches, though each pretends, to have sufficient reasons for believing it is the originally designed path leading to the tree of divine truth.

Through all of this transformation, we note the theory of Heaven and Hell are predominant. In few instances are they in any way modified. It is not strange that these were preserved as the corner stones of all religious thought. They give to it, prominence and attraction, and nerve gripping interest, in fact, they are the hinges on which swings the welfare of the whole proposition.

Those who contend their assurance of the existence of these non-logical propositions, is due to some unexplainable impression upon their conscience. have in fact, only the same hallucination so prevalent among unscientific minds. Distorted imagination proves nothing but an impaired understanding. If they have been attending protracted religious meetings for a number of consecutive evenings, with their minds concentrated upon a discourse of bewildering mysticism, they will in all probability, ex-

perience a peculiar sensation, which they immediately attribute to being the power of God. But which is of very common occurrence when the brain becomes tired or bewildered, and is in fact, only the first stages of hypnotic spell. This soon wears off with rest, but leaves an impression with those who do not understand the result of this phenomena, as being a sort of omen, of supreme importance and of supernatural origin.

It may be inferred, one of the reasons people so readily accept some form of religious doctrine, is the intolerable sufferings of man, brings to him a desire to seek consolation in the thought of a paradise, that he might at some time enjoy. While for want of vengeance on his enemies, brings before him visions of Hell. Thus, as there is a desire for these places of after life abode, he subsequently feign any sort of evidence resembling proof of their existence, but takes no pains to examine any evidences that would in any way, disprove their being.

At any time organized scientific efforts are brought to bear upon religious myths, in a way that will disprove their claims of authority which will dissolve public sentiment from their favor. At that moment the church in its present form will cease to dominate morally or otherwise. If it continues, it will have to teach truths that are true, and not "truths" that are false, as it has done from its origin. The time will surely come when the intelligence of the masses will be evolved to a point where they will demand truth, founded on scientific investigation, regarding these mysteries. They will then no longer be allured or frightened into a pretended belief in mythological fancies, coming from a semi-civilized age.

Of course it will be impossible for science to instill empirical understanding, in people of the lay classes, until these classes can acquire a courageous desire to attain the invincible truth. At that time they will relinquish their prejudice and submit their judgment to thoughtful reason. They will then make marvelous progress intellectually.

It is through this window of scientific understanding, that we are permitted to gain a glimpse of the mighty laboratory of creation. It is then we see the absurdity of the ancient myths, devised, by remote wise men of problems their meagre intelligence was unable to penetrate, and in which science is invariably disproving their deductions. As for instance, their condemning the soul to continual torment embodying their idea of an eternal abidance in the fires of Hell, as described in the Bible, a lake of fire. The material body is resurrected and, together with the soul, is cast into this fire to burn with tormented agony for ever.

As we understand the action of fire on flesh, it is a drying and condensing process. All moisture is rapidly removed from the outermost tissues, whereupon they are scaled off in the form of an ash. The rapidity with which this drying process takes place is the cause of pain. If it were to operate slowly, there would be no pain, in either case the entire material body would be reduced to ashes in the course of time. Therefore it is impossible for us to understand how the human body could thus suffer eternally. For if there was much pain it would have to be consumed rapidly, in which case it would not last throughout eternity, and if it did last for any great length of time, the consuming

process would necessarily be so slow there would be no pain.

It might be argued, that by some miraculous transformation, the body is made to withstand Hell fire through eternity and still suffer continually. But the scriptures make no mention of such possibility, and if it did, it would not establish the statement as a fact.

However, the evolutionary transformation of the mind of the people to a standard so high, they will no longer tolerate the mental pollution of such absurdity, will not come rapidly. No more so than the natural course of evolution can bring it about. Our first scientific thinkers and writers on this subject, made this same prediction. As the church is still in existence, all clergymen are unanimous in their ridicule of this assumption. Yet, those writers could see, as we see today, through the vision of foresight, this ultimate result is inevitable. That the church will lose its influence as an infallible organization, is unmistakable from the fact the natural trend of the situation is in that direction, seen by the materialistic wave that is continually widening and broadening throughout the world. In the great colleges of higher learning, the scientific thought is displacing the religious environment. They are becoming more and more interested in scientific research, to the exclusion, in silent contempt, of the mythological religious doctrines. Also a great change is noticeable in the religious activities of the people of the masses, they are becoming more liberal in their religious views, considering the matter with more generous munificence.

A great deal of the present day church work is carried on by reason of the sociability and moral

benevolence it affords, rather than from sheer divine devotion. In many communities, the church congregations are made up almost wholly of women, while the men are everywhere growing less interested in devotional exercises.

These conditions are becoming more marked especially in the last decade. This mental attitude did not come about by accident; there is a reason for it, which can be attributed to cause and effect. The inquisitive nature of man has given to him strength to compare the teachings of modern science and reason, with the demands of the church. And as "survival of the fittest" must prevail, those fabulous declarations must gradually but eventually fall before the sharpening cycle of accessible knowledge. In time those ecclesiastical creeds will no longer take precedence over wisdom.

In the face of this cognizant situation, the clergy is placing great reliance on the claim that the church is making distinct gains. They contend such facts, as sufficient evidence that the Bible is the inspired word of God. Be this as it may and whatever bearing it may have with the convictions of the average person, it will give us no intelligence whatever on the question at issue, for there are other reasons why the church should make great gains, in every way. We are not amazed that the church is making gains, when we take into account the fact, there are men numbered by the hundreds of thousands, who are making it their sole occupation to expound the doctrines of the church. While at the same time millions of Bibles and as many more popular religious books, fill the shelves of public and private libraries, while untold numbers of religious periodicals are flitting their leaves in every nook and corner

of the land. All teaching the public, they are sinners in the eyes of the Lord and in greatest danger of sacrificing their eternal happiness, unless they submit to be lead from the darkness of sin, to the light of righteousness, by the process of religious devotion.

On the other hand, there is not a man making it his exclusive business to discuss Materialistic views. There are few, if any, lecturers touching upon this subject and very few popular books treating upon the subject. People who are taking interest in Materialistic findings, are doing so out of purely selfish motives; they do not care to induce others to join their ranks, feeling that everyone has a right to their own opinion regarding these matters. What time they devote to the subject is done so for their own satisfaction. None of them are making any money out of it and none of them care to. If the public do not care to accept the deductions of scientific research and subsequently Materialism, they are at liberty to leave it alone; though Materialists understand these researches are the only mantle that will shed the light of knowledge upon the pathway of wisdom. No other course within the reach of man's propensities, will yield to him more than delusion and curbed understanding. Again, Materialists have no desire to condemn any unbeliever in their faith to the tortures of Hell, as does the sanctified and holy righteous teachers of the church.

Under this peculiar unorganized, unenergetic and indifferent procedure, Materialism is making unbounded strides in the march of intellectual progress, mainly among the unbiased and higher educated scholars. The essential reason for this being the

situation, is the scientifically cultured mind is not bewildered by the fanciful allurements of romantic fables. And the apparent awakening of new spiritual inspiration or supernatural influences of the holy spirit, are understood to be only passing fancies of persons having little faculty of choice determination.

CHAPTER VII.

Religions as Superstitions.

It is highly offensive to the Christian to allude to his religion as a superstitious faith. But any religion that believes the first man was momentarily created in full development of manhood and out of ordinary road dust and the first woman was also fully developed and instantly matured from a bit of rib bone, a reptile having a perfect vocabulary, who conversed in the human tongue with them, is certainly superstitious.

A religion that teaches as a truth that there was a rainstorm that lasted incessantly for six weeks in which the deluge, like torrents, enveloped and drowned the whole earth, together with the story of an ark that drifted for over a year, with millions of specimen animals, insects and reptiles, together with all manner of fowls and a goodly representation of the human family, all housed in a boxlike inclosure, without doors or windows or other ventilation; stories of rivers being turned to blood, of sea waters being parted and dry roads formed across their beds, only the superstitious could believe.

A religion that asks us to believe millions of people were fed for forty years in a desert upon manna from Heaven alone, the stories of the feats of Samson, or the story of Jonah and the whale, or Lot's wife being turned to salt; the tale of Joshua stopping the rotation of the earth to lengthen a day; the immense ages of Noah, Methusala and many others,

such a religion is asking its followers to be superstitious.

The tale of Daniel remaining in a den of ferocious and starved lions without being harmed, or the story of Cain finding a wife in the Land of Nod when there were no people from which to select a wife. The new Jerusalem which is described as a city standing somewhere in space, that is not only fifteen hundred miles square but also the same number of miles high; the miraculous conception of Christ; of the miracles he was claimed to have performed; his rising from the dead and ascending bodily up to Heaven; the day dreams of John as chronicled in the Book of Revelations, all bear suspicious evidence of being kept alive by superstitious people.

Religion, as well as all other forms of superstition, is so firmly imbedded in the imaginative element of man's composition, by reason of its having been bred into him for so many centuries, it is not possible that he could have this vice corrected in a moderate length of time. It is more reasonable to suppose that it will be necessary to breed it out of him by the same method that it was bred in. The time at which we might expect all traces of superstition will be eradicated from the human intellect will depend upon what time the cleaning begins with a determination to make a thorough renovation.

The baseless credulity manifested in the belief of supernatural revelation is one of the greatest factors in superstitious beliefs. It is also one of the most difficult to eradicate from the minds of the people. Its absurdity is marked, when we make a few reflections and comparisons. For example: If one of our foremost and credible citizens of today were to publicly proclaim that he had received through reve-

lation from God, an important message of instructions for the welfare of the people, he would at once be criticised in no mistakable terms for heresy by the religious fanatic. And his mental condition would be called in question by the more conservative. While these same people are only too eager to accept such proclamations assumed to have been issued by men who lived in an obscure age, and were, doubtless, only plain aborigines, possessing unconservative proclivities. Another form of superstition is manifested by some religious bodies who claim it is possible for them to cure all ailments the human body is heir to. By the simple exertion of faith and the administration of particular forms of prayers. The combining of faith with prayer is, of course, very essential, because if the operation fails to have the desired effect, and the prayer is not answered, the patient is accused of failing in his faith. And the theory of the efficacy of prayer loses none of its potency.

However, such forms of treatment might have beneficial effect upon what might be termed imaginary complaints. In fact, it might be possible to bring about reactionary mental forces to bear so strongly upon the system that some forms of nervousness would be modified. Such ailments as insomnia and perhaps some form of neuralgia may be eliminated to some extent.

Any ailment that is being aggravated by mental depression would doubtless react with a reaction of mental activities. But it is not possible such treatment could have any beneficial effect upon malignant tumors or dislocated joints, as is sometimes claimed they do. If this were possible why should they not go a few steps further and grow new limbs on the mutilated bodies of the maimed, or restore organs

of vision in the eyeless sockets of the blind? These things are impossible for the reason they are not in accordance with the processes of natural laws. No prayers or any form of faith ever has, or ever will, change the course of these laws.

When we deny the existence of the immortal soul we are confronted by other formidable bodies of superstitious sects, one of these in particular styles themselves Spiritualists. These people think they have Materialistic demonstrations available to support their belief in spirits. Regardless of what effect these spiritual demonstrations have upon the laity, it is well known they do not possess any qualities of service to science. If they are not wholly fictitious, these phenomenal experiments may be classed with the phenomenal demonstrations of hypnotism and mental telepathy.

To say a scientific explanation can be made of any of these phenomena would not be consistent with what knowledge we possess of the matter. This much is known. Each demonstration requires the efforts of a medium or demonstrator who must put himself in harmony with the situation. He must be in full possession of his senses, he must also have undivided attention and co-operation of the company. If at any time he loses conjunctive support of the assistant no demonstration will materialize. If during the act of the demonstration the operator was, by any means stricken senseless, the demonstration would at once cease or fail to develop.

Knowing the foregoing requirements are essential for a successful demonstration with so-called spirits, we are forced to make the following deductions: Whatever activity is exerted to produce the assumed phenomenon, it is contained within and is a part of

the physical being of the operator. Furthermore, it is not claimed that spirits make demonstrations without the aid of mediums. Therefore, the conclusion should be, that no spirits are needed to carry on an experiment and that all such demonstrations are accountable entirely to the material energy of the operator for its appearance, and its hallucinative effect upon the spectators.

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Those who are following any of the many different Christian religions willingly imagine themselves very much out of harmony with all the oriental forms of religion. They claim those are not the true Godly designed forms of worship and are, in fact, only heathen superstitions. There is no question but this is a correct hypothesis. But do not Christians realize their religions are also heathen superstitions as viewed by the modern Materialist?

It is true most of the oriental religions worshiped idols. The reason for this is their power of imagination is not as strong as that of the Christian. They could not form a plan of devotion to an unseen deity. The fact they chose to believe the spirit of God dwelt in a stone, wooden or metal idol, is no more heathenish than the Christian's belief that it dwells in their modern sanctuary. This practice did not impair the idolator's faith, or lessen his conception of a living deity. Their intention was just as obedient, according to their conception of divine worship as any other religious service. Their doctrines were based upon traditional legends that were doubtless just as ancient and authentic as those of any other religion.

It is this discrepancy of these ancient traditions that gives rise to conflicting convictions. The con-

troversy becomes more and more perpetual. One possessing full faith in frivolous doctrines, taught to his race from infancy. The other, insanelly jealous of his neighbor, clings more adhesively to the religious doctrines that have fed the apathetic brain of his race since its origin. The controversy shows both conceptions to be the product of the inventive faculty of man, and not the unremitting and intensive design of an omnipotent God. One of these conceptions of divine worship is surely wrong, the other is probably no less erroneous.

However, the modern Christian has the impression it is the oriental form that is in error. And he expends immense energies in foreign missionary work. These societies are doubtless a great benefactor, having done a great deal of good in foreign lands in a general educational way. While this fact is heartily conceded, there can be no room for doubt but there could have been more real good done there, as in our own country, through the course of scientific channels, than through religious influence.

There could be no more reason for polluting the minds of ignorant foreigners with unreasonable superstition to educate them, than there is to fetter the mental possibilities of our own children with the same mythological ideas.

Many queer and superstitious theories have been devised from the observation of mental phenomena, the causes of which are not well understood. Some of these peculiarities are used on which to establish some new religion, or used as a support to strengthen faith in other religious doctrines already established. The dual mind theory has commanded the attention of a great many theorists for a considerable time. This theory assumes

that man possesses two minds, one of which is described as the objective mind. This is the mind we are acquainted with; it is the ordinary consciousness; its conditions are the five senses. This objective mind is admitted to be destructible with the body. The other mind is termed the subjective mind. Which is supposed to be the inactive or uncontrollable section of the intellect. Advocates of this theory admit that we really know very little about the subjective mind, but pretend to prove that such a mind does exist, from experiments made with the phenomena known as hypnotism and mental telepathy. They also contend that dreams are the result of the activities of the subjective mind.

To the mind of the modern Materialist they simply try to explain these phenomena by inventing this theory of the subjective mind, or, as they choose to call it, the immortal soul. But with this theory it appears that it is necessary to create a human body in order to obtain one of these subjective minds as with the soul. Therefore it would seem reasonable to believe it is dependent upon the body for its existence, and if it exists at all, there is absolutely no reason for believing that it survives the destruction of the body. On the other hand, if the subjective mind, or soul, is separate from the body, and we really know nothing about it, not acquainted with it, so to speak, why should we manifest any interest in it at any time?

Dreams have been the source of considerable contemplation through all time. Many believe dreams are omens of coming events. Others think it is the involuntary action of the subjective mind. Modern Materialists explain dreams as being the result of

impaired mental activities. The result is almost identical with that produced in insane persons.

To understand these results it will be necessary to have some idea of the physiology of the brain matter. In this research we find the physical organs of the brain are composed of immense numbers of different sections, or divisions, each calculated to perform certain functions within themselves, and, in conjunction with other sections of the organ, each section of the brain is the physical basis of certain mental energies. By the exercises of these energies a person becomes more efficient in certain lines of endeavor, and those portions of the brain matter most in use will become developed to such a perceptible degree as to leave no doubt that the special development of this matter is the result of mental activities; or an individual may be endowed by natural cogent talent in certain lines, such as music, drawing, mathematics, etc., caused by an especially highly developed portion of the brain matter at birth of the individual. Thus it is seen every faculty has its special compartment in the brain structure, and from the fact that it is possible to develop these faculties, we are led to believe that each conscious experience leads to the creation of new brain cells. While each faculty is developed in its own compartment it is necessary for this section of the brain to work co-operatively with the other sections, or we would have developed unbalanced ideas. And right here is where we get the explanation of dreams, as well as insane conditions. The brain is capable of generating thoughts, which, through their course of development, are guided by the individual's judgment—which is the result of learning—to a scientifically conceived calculation.

But when a partially paralyzed condition occurs in one or more of these sections of the brain by reason of disease, as a permanent affliction, and sleep as a temporary rest, extorted ideas will be the result. Dreams never occur during profound sleep. It is at a stage when only a portion of the brain cells are thus affected that the abnormal mental impressions are produced. The normal portions of the brain are capable of producing thoughts that would, under ordinary conditions produce intelligent ideas, though under these abnormal conditions the individual's better judgment is impaired to such an extent he is unable to control these abnormal thoughts, and one such unbalanced idea is responsible for another, and the process goes on until profound sleep or entire wakefulness relieves the demented condition. Where disease is the cause of some of these brain cells' inactivity, we perceive extorted ideas are continuous and our diagnosis is insanity.

Another queerly construed idea is that human intelligence is supernatural, and the claim that man is the only animal possessing such intelligence; that all the apparent intelligence displayed by the lower animals is the result of natural instinct. This theory may satisfy the desire of some who fancy it strengthens their argument of the existence of an immortal soul, but the probabilities that any naturalist could lead himself to believe such theory contained a conformity of facts is exceedingly slight.

Animals do not think as intricately as does man, but to say they do not think at all is placing blank opinion ahead of judicial reason. The fact that all animals are capable of being taught many feats that are far remote from their natural tendencies, will disprove such ideas. Our friend the dog is easily

trained to care for other domestic animals; he is also readily taught to perform tricks without number. We see plainly traits showing intellectual activity in the wild and ferocious animals and reptiles when they cunningly plan the attack and capture of their prey. The lazy crocodile lying upon the sunny beach plans the capture of a bathing pickaninny, then accomplishes his desire with unquestionable skill, and makes off with his prey. This tendency may be instinctive, but it is evident he never captured two pickaninnies at the same place or in exactly the same way; therefore it was necessary for him to make some mental calculations in his process of attack. Again we see two wild animals of the forest sparring for an attack; each one is displaying almost human intelligence in designing an advance. The clash comes, each animal aiming at the vital part of his foe, every means at his command is brought into play. When one decides he is outclassed he loses no time in making his retreat and to a place where he will have the advantage, behind a rock or in a cave, or he may hide himself in some obscure place. These actions may be termed instinct, but his judgment and reason are guiding him in his mode of defense.

When very young pigs are suddenly surprised by an approaching object they will quickly prostrate themselves flat on the ground, in an apparent effort to hide themselves. This is instinct, plain and simple, because all little pigs do this in the same way. However, this trait is not continued after the animal becomes a few weeks of age; apparently there comes to them a realization that the act is a useless agency of protection. This is only one instance showing that animals learn very readily, by experience.

All domestic animals soon learn where their water-

ing place is, as well as the place where they may obtain food, showing their intellect is capable of retaining impressions. Such impressions could not be thus retained, if there was no faculty whereby they could record in their memory, transpiring occurrences. This faculty is not equally marked in all classes of animals, nor in all individuals of the same class. Yet it exists in a more or less degree in all of them.

Accordingly we are driven to the following conclusions: If all animals have reasoning intelligence, however crude and undeveloped it may be, it places them in the same general class with men. The fact they are not man's equal does not disprove nature's primary intention to have all animals, including man, in the same classification, intellectually as well as physically. Or a more proper statement might be, to say there is nothing to prove that nature intended man to be different intelligently from other animals.

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Many times through many generations have these same problems been worked out. Many consecutive generations of free thinkers have dwelt upon these questions long before they were awarded the distinction of scientists. Their meditations left with them strong convictions that man is only an animal in the eyes of nature. These conclusions came through an honest research and an honest motive. Yet this class of scientists have received, from the clergy, the most severe condemnation during their lifetime. After which they have invariably been accused of repenting of their views at the last hour of their lives. While it is not impossible that a few free thinkers have, at this time, repented, it is not probable that a scientifically educated Materialist would

relinquish his confirmed belief in his convictions at the last hour of his life, no more so than there would be for the most devout Christian losing faith in his devoted belief at such an hour. However, if such a coincidence did occur at the end of a long siege of illness, in which the patient was reduced to utter exhaustion, both physically and mentally, it would not be strange if they did revert to some form of religion, especially if they were subjected to the will and influence of others who were religiously inclined, at that time.

There are many more real reasons why a person should become confirmed in the Materialistic findings, than that he should become infatuated with the teachings of the church, especially if his own mentality is sufficiently potent to enable him to exercise self-jurisdiction.

It is generally conceded by Materialists that no one has a just right to either affirm or deny the holding of modern Materialism, or any other scientific deductions, unless the mind is capable in every way to conceive and master the problems there involved.

CHAPTER VIII.

Modern Materialism is the direct oppositionist to the doctrines of spiritual religions. Yet it is safe to assume that if the church had to undergo the same scrutiny and then depend upon the same unorganized and unpretentious facilities for its progress, that Materialism is doing. It would rapidly lose its prestige.

The great amount of energy expended by the church in heralding her doctrines throughout the world, is amazing. Although, it is a source of great anxiety, among church heads, that the church is losing its power of influence to an alarming degree.

With all of their glowing assurance of absolute trust in their followers, there lurks behind this glittering array of confidence, a realization that Materialistic views are permeating religious organizations causing a weakening of religious faith in a more dangerous way than ever existed any previous period.

It is remarkable the great and exhaustive energies disbursed by the traveling evangelists, both great and small. They are of all classes of ability and roam the country in great numbers. Some of them are making vast fortunes from the vending of, what they each choose to call a true form of Christian religion. They study religion from a business stand point and give the business end of the game, the greater part of their attention.

In any community where one of these evangelists is billed to carry on a campaign, it is understood, the people are expected to hail him with great cheer.

He must be entreated to the very best the community afford. Above all he must be well paid for his services. While not a word of criticism regarding the evangelist, his methods or his doctrine, shall be uttered by any one, such utterances would be a crime of such immense magnitude, its disgrace would be beyond expression. Its perpetrator would be looked upon with the most stupenduous awe.

If a well appearing gentleman came among them, selling fictitious securities, condemnation would be heaped upon him from every hand. While, if the same gentleman came to dispense a fictitious religion, even at a much higher price, the public would be expected to receive him with open arms. He is allowed to censure the people of the community in every way his vocabulary permits, yet every statement he utters and every charge he makes must have the heartiest sanction of the people or they pay the penalty of Hell, according to his teachings.

When his services of a few weeks duration have ended, his purse must be well filled, congratulating compliments must accompany him on his way. He takes with him the loyal esteem of the newly devoted converts. This class earnestly expect the whole community to join them in their apparent adequate appreciation of evangelical efficiency. They court every impression left by the evangelist as though it were a direct rehearsal of the will of God. The evangelist is careful to leave this suggestion with his convert as well as to impress upon them that he has conferred the greatest blessing it is possible to bestow. He has lead them to believe through all his discourses, he has not made a single statement holding other than divine truth, though the greater

percent of which are by the laws of reason confuted.

There are cases on recent record where there has been more than a hundred thousand dollars paid to one evangelist for no more than eight weeks of such service. Some of these men are glorified with the record of having converted people by the thousands during a single course of meetings. Yet the actual number of converts cannot be placed at more than ten percent of the total attendance. If the evangelist is of the insignificant variety, and his total attendance is one thousand, the converts will number approximately one hundred. While if he is capable of assuming the proportions of a great evangelist and his total attendance aggregate a hundred thousand people, then his converts may number ten thousand. For about this percent of the people can be relied upon to accept any form of doctrine, religious or otherwise, and it matters little how absurd or unreasonable the logic of the doctrine may be.

The more physical exercise and abnormal expression the evangelist displays in expounding his theories the more effect it will have upon his audience. He is then described as possessing unusual skill in divine interpretation. He is thus more certain to be rewarded with the ten percent of his hearers in accepting him and his doctrine as divine agents.

The great enthusiasm manifested in some of the large tabernacle campaigns held by some of the more widely renowned evangelists throughout the country in recent years, is presumed by the enthusiasts as being due to the evangelist being especially ordained by God to carry on this particular branch of religious work. But the modern thinker

will attribute it to the ignorance of the masses on psychological subjects. By reason of this ignorance they are easily swayed to or from any doctrine if it is well presented.

The Materialistic philosopher considers such evangelists scientific business managers of rare ability. Who by the artistic manipulation of their affairs are enabled to yoke and enslave the public press to unconsciously render unlimited amounts of free advertising to the evangelist. The large daily papers as well as every class of periodicals appear to lose all power of resistance in their wild clamor of news and willingly submit to the demands of the evangelist for free space. This advantage alone would promote the efforts of almost any one to renown and success in almost any line of endeavor. When these daily papers condescend to donate thousands of dollars worth of free advertising their readers are enamored with a desire to see and hear the evangelist, consequently great audiences are the result, and as they do not realize that his success is due in great part to the mismanagement of the news papers advertising department. They imagine he is endowed with supernatural qualities which in their estimation makes all of his statements profound truths, thus a goodly number will be converted.

Let us see what is the most essential qualities necessary to become an ardent enthusiast in religious doctrines. In the first place, the candidate must put his mind in a susceptible attitude to receive the doctrine, he must agree to believe every thing without question the church teaches, and more he must confirm everything the pastor sees fit to teach. He must cast asunder any conclusions of his own, and must not be guilty of examining any theories not

authorized by the church. The religious convert must require no scientific proofs whatever of the claims set up by the church. The mere mention of such an outrageous suggestion would endanger the welfare of his soul.

And no mortal efforts could be expected to be crowned with any semblance of success under such blasphemous circumstances.

The truth is, such candidates must be held in ignorance and subjection, in fear and trembling, if possible, they must not be allowed to think for themselves on religious subjects until they are safely bound by religious convictions. Their environments must be at all times those of the church, all advantages of which must be paid for liberally with cash as well as devotion. This feature is quite essential that the earnings and revenues of the ministry shall continue. This is doubtless the most significant motive of the whole scheme.

At all events, the religious converts mind must not become contaminated with materialistic views. It is plain he must be kept in ignorance on this subject if he is to remain a devoted dupe, with lax purse and devoted energies to induce others to join the fold.

A very few of these converts are self-responsible for their own conversion. Only a very small percent if any of them could give a single intelligent reason for accepting the faith. While on the other hand there are no greater percent of the nonreligious element that can give intelligent reasons for not accepting some religious cult. This condition is rightly explained by the masses of the people devoting no attention to this subject, they are depending upon

others to do their thinking for them. Thus they are easily lead in any direction. Any theory plausibly presented appear to them to be right and reasonable. Therefore, the first doctrine they come in contact with is the one they become infatuated with, and if they happen to be associated with any particular religious influences they become devoted to that mode of belief and soon find satisfaction in believing the Bible is the key to all problems. Many of these people become fanatics, they are devoted to this or that belief and do not inquire as to the infallibility of the doctrine. Their entire time of devotional energy is spent nursing their chosen cult. Almost the entire time of each church service is devoted in whipping the people into line and condemning them in unmerciful terms if they refuse to obey. Each clergyman, of course, rests in the theory that he is infallibly correct in all particulars. Each church has its own theological schools, where they teach their own religious doctrines and dogmas according to their own ideas. It is here their clergymen are educated to preach these prepossessions to the people. Many of these ideas are directly opposite to those of other denominations, though each are stubbornly defending their contentions.

There has been some agitation of consolidation of churches in which an amalgamation would be the necessary result. On close observation it is learned those most interested in the movement could be induced to participate only by the other churches coming to their belief and doctrine. Thus we see the antagonism is wedging itself more firmly between the different church sects at each endeavor to convince the non-believer that their intentions and

purposes are mutual. Antagonism! Is it possible there could be antagonism in Gods own church? What must we conclude knowing these conditions prevail? How is the church going to explain away these difficulties? What will they say of these discrepancies that will make them clear to the inquirer?

The church still pretends to be the guiding agency of civilization, they are continually suggesting ways and means by which the people should be lead or forced to accept their teachings. They have set on foot numerous efforts to enforce the Sunday law. In this movement there is always an effort made to put out of business all Sunday amusements and close the parks. This should never come to pass, but if it does, it would be a long stride backwards. It would be giving the church a dominating power that no organization should have without the consent of all the people. If the church should obtain such power, the next step would be to unite church and state. This would give the church the power to force its submissions upon the unwilling citizens. Such domination could not be right or just, no more so than if Materialists were so strong that they could and would force their views upon the unwilling church enthusiast.

When any one sees fit to revel in any particular doctrine, whether it is crowned with all the most rational ideas ever presented by human intelligence or not they should not be restrained from doing so. But they should never on any account obtain the authority to force such views upon any one against their will.

Under those conditions, one sects would soon gain the political power, then all would be forced to pay tribute to the predominating church. There are

church organizations today who have definite designs on just such dominating power. This is a fact not concealed and the truthfulness of which cannot be questioned. It would be safe to say there is not a church organization in existence who do not long to wield the power of the law, they feel perfectly competent and would feel justifiable in attaining this sort of strength. Some of these organizations manifest no such desire, claiming to oppose the union of church and state, but this only occurs with those who are so hopeless in the minority they could never hope to hold such an important position.

If any of them should, such authority would doubtless force the whole land into submission. In fact, any of the churches will accuse all the rest of having necessary inclinations to operate that kind of jurisdiction, but will deny that they themselves are in a class with any of the others in this desire. Such would be a glorious situation for the party in power, but would be Hell for all the rest.

The theory that it is sinful to attend moral places of amusement on Sunday is insane absurdity. If it cannot be considered harmful to attend on other days it cannot be scientifically considered harmful on Sunday. Sunday is a fact only in theory. It cannot be distinguished by any scientific process, therefore it is practically no different from any other day in the eyes of nature.

It will be admitted Sunday amusements are a menace to the church, as they would be to any other organization, Materialists included, if such organizations had a desire to force their doctrines upon the whole community and persisted in setting aside one whole day each week for that express purpose. But those who do not want to attend any kind of Sunday

services should not be forced to do so by the few that do.

Dancing and card parties are especially singled out and awarded the vigorous condemnation of the church. Just why they have been the brunt of warfare is not easy to understand. That possible harm has been known to result from excessive indulgence in these pastimes is possible. In fact, it is quite probable that some have slipped from the path of right living while indulging in them. But if the few who can attribute their downfall to these amusements were compared in numbers to those who have participated and experienced no detrimental results, the percentage on comparison would show those with destroyed morals would be so greatly in the minority their numbers would fade into insignificance.

If dancers were the only ones that fell from grace then we might take notice. But people from all walks of life, even vast numbers of the clergy, have fallen into disgrace. And no one would accuse a clergyman of dancing or playing at cards. We are requested again to mention nothing of the fact that immoral clergymen are abounding in great numbers. It is asserted that such suggestion reflects injustice on the church. It is not the church that materialism is seeking to corrupt, or unjustly defame the ministry at large. It is the truth Materialism is seeking and it refuses to unjustly shield the ministry or the church or any other organization with misstatements or false reports. Neither will it bear false witness or tolerate untrue evidence to defend or befriend any person, creed, doctrine or theory whatsoever.

There can be no doubt but that those who have transgressed the moral laws have done so in full possession of their faculties, and have indulged because

it was their desire to do so. It is also probable dancing had nothing whatever to do with their downfall. Though it is plain to see that any profligates, when questioned on so delicate a subject, would naturally tend to charge their disgrace to some irresponsible source. It is quite clear the warfare directed against these amusements, as many other so-called sins, is only another desire on the part of the clergy to dominate over the pleasures and pastimes of their followers.

Those who are devoted to the theory of soul redemption will confront the Materialist with what they consider a most stupendous question, as follows: If Materialism takes from us whatever consolation we derive from a belief and faith in a heavenly reward, what has it to offer as a recompense? In the first place, Materialism offers to us absolute and unflinching truth concerning ourselves. It has endeavored in a fearless manner to obtain the facts regarding man's origin and destiny unadulterated with myth. Its only object is to place before us the true conditions regarding this important subject. It is in constant search for scientific facts, with no other object in view than to enlighten the world as to all things of human interest. It endeavors to determine and designate the natural laws controlling phenomena and energies that influence the welfare of mankind.

As to the reward and punishment for right and wrong living, Materialism teaches we shall suffer only the punishment meted out to us while we are alive, which is doubtless sufficient in most cases. The tortures of self-conscience and remorse, together with the different modes of punishments administered by the criminal statutes, will meet the necessary

requirements for our immediate welfare. At any rate it will certainly be unnecessary, as well as very unjust, to torture any criminal in everlasting hellfire throughout eternity.

If Materialism does no other good, it blesses man with the thought there is not a single soul being subjected to the unspeakable torment as that described and taught by the church. This of itself should be a great relief to the mind of any one. How can anyone see a happy or contented moment borne down by this terrible declaration and proposal of the church? That not only possibly, but most probably, some or all of their loved ones who have relinquished life are being unjustly submitted to this unthinkable condemnation if the important declarations of the Bible and church are true.

After we have resolved to accept this awful and unreasonable proposition as divine truth, and when we have decided the whole operation is designed and carried out by an all wise, powerful and merciful God, we are expected to humble ourselves when we bow our heads in prayer and praise to this imaginary man-God who will have condemned almost the entire population that has inhabited the earth to this eternal damnation, according to the best judgment of the foremost theologians. Any sincerity in such a belief would be sufficient to place anyone in a class with the insane.

Why should not any theory be welcome that would remove this heart-rending agony from the minds of those who are surely writhing in inexplicit anguish under the belief that such conditions do really exist? This damnable enigma should no longer occupy a place in the minds of civilized man. With the present state of intellectuality, such illusive doc-

trines should be erased from the whole category of mental reasoning.

Some otherwise loyal religious people claim they do not believe anyone will be tortured in hell for frivolous sins and that they are willing to strike out this or that from the Bible text and reject it as absurd and untrue. But this fact will confront such people: The whole fabric of religious thought of whatever variety is derived from those ancient traditions that go to make up the Bible, and it must be accepted or rejected in whole. Any other view would be inconsistent for it could not be possible to accept the sweet and reject the bitter of these doctrines. If the story of heaven is true, then the story of hell is also true. There can be no other conception. There is as much proof of one as the other.

Materialism does not admit of reward after death for good deeds done during the lifetime of individuals. All rewards must be expected while life exists, and must be received while we are in position to enjoy them. But what are we to expect in the way of reward? How are we to receive them, and how are we to know they are rewards?

In considering this question it will be necessary to take into account the well-established fact: he who conforms his movement to those of natural laws, will receive his reward for so doing. If he acknowledges, and conforms to the laws of health, he will, in all probability, receive the reward derived from having good health. While if he disregards these laws he is almost certain to pay the penalty for such transgression, and sickness will be the inevitable result.

If man plans his future in accordance with the dictations of these laws, he may expect advantageous results. Therefore, if self respect is one of the high-

est ambitions that appeals to him and he carries out his activities with the idea of maintaining these requirements according to the views of public opinion, he will be certain to receive the respect and admiration of his fellow men. But if he is careless as to these particulars, giving little or no attention to their influences, Nature will unmindfully mete out to him the intense punishment of disgrace. Perhaps the most sublime reward we may expect in return for right living is the unestimable glory of public admiration and respect.

Honesty, morality, industry and kindness may be regarded as the four corner stones on which a perfect character may be built. Such a character might be expected to stand out in sublime quality and receive the highest esteem possible for public respect to bestow, which is the most lofty attainment in life, in fact the only one worth striving for.

If any person could gain a position so high in the estimation of his community that no one could truthfully characterize him with other words than praise and honor, where all commentations were graced with commendations of the highest character, and where such allusions bore only tributes of gratitude and respect, such person possesses all the glory, honor and fame necessary to comprise a reward that should satisfy the most ambitious.

The average person will admit their inability as well as their unwillingness to relinquish their belief and hope in a hereafter life, professing such hope will lessen the ordeals and horrors of death. While the termination of man's life, what we term death, is the most serious proposition that could occupy his mind, it is safe to assume the actual death holds none of the terrors many suppose. Death is a nat-

ural process and is attended with little or no pain. It seldom if ever bears intimation of its approaching dissolution to those nearing the point of death. Under any and all conditions, no one will ever know when the end comes to his existence. For we know it is necessary to make a mental record of any occurrence in order that we may have a realization of it. It will then be seen, after consciousness leaves us we no longer possess the faculty of reason, therefore we cannot make a record of our death and can have no realization of its taking place. We may rest peacefully assured we will live on and on as long as we have any realization, and when this faculty leaves us it could make no difference to us at what time death overtakes us. Thus the actual death struggles are never realized by any one at the time his own life expires.

So far as the mind is able to discern, the sensation of death is no different from that of sleep, which is one of the most welcome conditions possible to conceive when nature calls upon our nervous system to yield to sleep. And when nature calls upon us to relinquish our lives and enter the everlasting sleep we will find ourselves not only willing, but eager, and there will be no fear or horror. There could be no sensation other than tranquility, for there is nothing to be more desired than serene and peaceful sleep.

In the realm of this perfect sleep
Centuries will flit their weary tardiness of time,
As peaceful moments of the hour.
Time and eternity could unfold no pandemonium of
unrest,
But a peaceful plateau of perfect bliss
Will vicissitude the irksome life.

If the student of Materialism is unable to take kindly to this theory of the termination of life, with his first conception of it, he will experience no difficulty in so doing if he will bring to bear upon his conscience a line of thought necessary to arrive at a point where he can realize that after the moment the final unconsciousness obliterates his faculties, it could make absolutely no difference to him whether he remained in this condition a moment or a multi-million centuries.

If nature intended obliteration to be the ultimate termination of man, as scientific investigation seems to show, there could be no reasonable advantage gained by beguiling himself by a mythological delusion of the immortal soul theory. Thus there could be no object in merely imitating the devotions of those who have faith in the traditional eternal result. Materialism removes any possible belief that any one shall be subjected to the torments of hell. This assurance alone is worth many times the assurance of his own heavenly reward to the true lover of humanity. Again, if Materialism is successful in removing from the mind the fear of hell, there is nothing to fear at the time of death, thus any and all mental discomforts at that time will be eliminated.

There could be but one object in an hereafter life in heaven, and that would be the enjoyment of whatever pleasures and happiness such a place would afford. However, if we were resting in absolute effacement, we would be relieved of the agitation necessary in the process enjoyment. On the other hand, if we are persistently intent on obtaining the heavenly reward, and we will give a little thought as to what we may expect in return for our efforts, that is to say: if we are desirous of following the

teachings of the Bible it would seem that we should have a definite understanding regarding the resurrection of the material body. However, when we turn to look into this matter we find there is no one who can give us any satisfactory or even vague intelligence regarding the subject, and we are forced by necessity to pass it by. Though it seems to be a predetermined conclusion that some such process does take place, and the "chosen few" will in reality appear upon the golden streets, guised in their original material bodies. Though there is not the slightest proof that this assumption is true, the Bible itself is painfully silent upon this subject. Yet it asserts a certain few will gain this reward. The question arises, Who will be elected by choice to attain the celestial redemption? When we endeavor to discern which ones of the human family will be admitted at the pearlaceous gates of heaven, after perusing what little authority we have we stand stricken with amazement, for the "word" tells us: the abominable shall not pass the gates but shall have their place in the lake of fire where they will be tormented day and night throughout endless eternity.

Let us see who will be able to pass the gates under these rulings. Is there a church organization who is not abominable in the estimation of some other church? Is there an individual who is not abominable in the eyes of someone else? Of course the questioner and judge is always the righteous one in his own estimation. And as there is no two churches or individuals alike, there could be no more than one that would not be abominable in the eyes of the creator.

Then we find that *all* liars are doomed to perdi-

tion. Does anyone know of another who never perpetrated a lie? Also the unbeliever is designed as one of the many who shall perish. Unbelief in what? Does anyone believe every contention of all the churches? We are evidently to understand, any who do not have such implicit faith are in danger of damnation, for how are they to know they are not rejecting the very system that will give them everlasting life?

It is at this point that every religious sect make their greatest mistake in thinking they are the only true church. Some of them deny this charge. However it is evident they do have such belief for there could be no other reason for their existence. They make calculations of their own, and to suit themselves. They pretend to prove this or that, as their desire wills. From the metaphorical statements set forth in certain passages of the scriptures, many of these statements are wholly void of explicit meaning, giving rise to religious discord.

It appears that most of such biblical expressions were issued to disguise the author's ignorance. Who could decipher the following passage? If your eye or hand offends you, you must dismember it and cast it away. In default of this command, the scriptures say you will be damned. A diseased eye or hand perhaps should be amputated to preserve the general health, but a failure to do so should not insure the neglecter everlasting torment in hell. Then we are told the teachings of the Bible are largely parabolic, and do not mean exactly what they seem to. If we are enabled to twist their meanings into forms that will fit our wishes, they lose their significance and remain as Materialists have assumed them to be, unauthoritative.

Statistics reveal the estimation that only about one fourth of the earth's population appertain any form of religion. In our most highly cultured communities the percentage of actual church devotees is much reduced from these figures. Thus it is evident the other three-quarters of the human race will have not the slightest chance to escape eternal damnation, a beautiful reflection for the religious sectarian to realize as he returns thanks to the God he understands to be all merciful.

When we have formed as close a conception of heaven as it is possible from a careful survey of the scriptures, what do we find? A place of great beauty, where life is eternal, where day rules the celestial city everlasting, where no pain or sorrow shall enter. We are supposed to enter this place where we will be forced to remain through eternity.

What is meant by eternity? If we will permit a few calculations to penetrate this subject, we are conscious only of the fact that eternity is a very long time. We will find ourselves utterly unable to fathom the significance of the term. If we let our thoughts dwell here, they may sink deeper and deeper into its meaning, even until they pass the corner stone of conjecture, and thence on to oblivion. Yet when they return they bear not the slightest conception of the term. No mental force can adhere to such a subject until a possible understanding is reached. But we are supposed to believe immortal souls incarnated in material bodies can and do live on and endure time so great. No mathematician could compute numbers of great enough magnitude, if reduced to centuries, that would constitute even a beginning of eternity.

What could be the object in such a journey? Can

we conceive of such endurance without fatigue? Why should we not prefer eternal sleep? There no cares or sorrows, no tears or toil could enter.

THE END.

Our bud of life blooms as from the bosom of the earth.

The importance of our being shall shed its worth.

While the panorama of life is but a glimpse of fair creation.

The pendulum of nature swings out to us, profound peace at separation.

POST SCRIPT.

Let us emerge from the mental straining phases of profound thought for a few moments while we ransack the imaginative sections of our intellect and permit to pass before our mind's eye a short paraphrase of what will doubtless be the realization of those who are permitted to tread the phantom causeway of eternal glory.

It will be necessary for us to bring ourselves to believe that there was at least one or two mortal beings who were successful in determining the true church of the living God and were also successful in understanding and carrying out every command therein codified. That they never made a mistake in the interpretation of any of the instructions, and never made a single misstep from the pathway of righteousness, therefore they are admitted at the pearly gates.

As all things began somewhere and as heaven must have been established long after the advent of man upon the earth, we must assume there was a first earthly and mortal man to enter this place of eternal bliss. For the want of something more appropriate let us assume this man bore the name of Mister Michal Miltedese Mandermore. It must be conjectured that this man entered heaven some time during the Christian era, for there is little trustworthy evidence to show that anyone attained that place of paradise before that time.

However, we find Mister Michal Miltedese Mandermore in the first hour of his advent. We see him wild eyed with wondrous amazement. The glit-

tering elegance of the eternal city dazzled his copious mentality beyond expression. The felicity therein abounding immensely surpassed his most exaggerated imagination of the celestial realm.

And so an unheaded motive piloted his footsteps along the golden way, a journey that would doubtless necessitate a period of time so incomprehensible in length that it forbids mention, to constitute what might be said to be a little ramble at leisure. During this stroll along the celestial thoroughfare Mr. Michal Miltedese Mandermore chanced to pass by the fountain, he paused to admire its marvelous beauty and betook himself of the medicamental waters; these indulgences consumed fully ten thousand years of time.

When he had brought his newly invigorated atoms to a new realization he was astounded at the enormous size and appalling height of heaven. And what at first sight was still more amazing was the scarcity of the inhabitants of the place, for he had not yet met a single soul upon those thoroughfares. However upon second thoughtful reflection he remembered the Bible had taught him, "the way is narrow and few shall enter therein", and the mystery was then cleared away. Whereupon he resumes his stroll. At the end of many thousands of years he arrives at the throne. Here he is escorted to a lonely seat in the parquet dress circle. Here he is entertained by the choir who render an anthem ten thousand years long. Then he watched the maneuvers of the beasts and the elders for another ten thousand years.

At the close of these exercises Mr. Michal Miltedese Mandermore reflects upon the time he has been in heaven and makes an inventorial investigation of

his dexterous movements. He finds that the long finger of memory could not point to the time when he had last enjoyed a bath. Thereupon he seeks a secluded spot upon the river banks and proceeds to enjoy the cool and refreshing waters. When he had finished, a glance at his Seth-Walthamton-Elginbery watch gave him the information that twenty thousand years had been consumed in the bathing pastime.

Then it is he realizes time is flying and there are many things he has not yet witnessed in the heavenly realm. He again takes up the toilsome pedestrian pursuit and after thus traveling a considerable distance he is attracted to the window, from which he was enabled to behold the satanic regions. He was amazed and amused at the condemned souls as they writhed, groaned and gnashed their teeth in their inexplicit agony and despair. Was he amused? Yes, for "no sorrow shall enter the kingdom of heaven". And so Mr. Michel Miltedese Mandermore amused himself for almost a hundred thousand years. Then reclining upon the downy cushion of a golden settee he basked in the sunshine of eternal bliss and indulged in wakeful slumbers for an incomprehensible length of time.

By this time he is becoming to be a comparatively old resident and feels it is his duty to go down to the gates and welcome some of the new arrivals. As they are not coming in very fast, he finds it is necessary to wait around for a great many centuries, after which time his wearied attention was attracted by the slow and sombre thuds of the little used door knocker indicating the arrival of a new comer. While St. Peter pulled himself together in preparation of examination of the candidate's credentials, Mr.

Mychel Miltedese Mandermore gave vent to expressions of delight at the sight of an earthly mortal man that could not be described in mortal words.

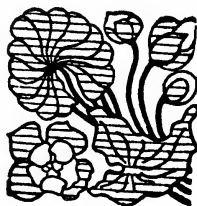
However the new arrival is detained for many decades while St. Peter scrutinizes his church career and religious records. His morals are not looked into. He may have committed murder, adultery, robbery or other atrocious crimes without number, but these are nonimportant in the estimation of St. Peter. If the applicant has been successful in selecting the true church, if his obedience to this church has been unwavering, even a repentance at the eleventh hour of his life may be sufficient to clear his whole character in the eyes of the Lord.

However we must assume this particular candidate passed the required examination, for Mr. Mychel Miltedese Mandermore is accorded the honor of showing him about. Their conversation of course fell to things at home upon the earth. He receives the news of the death of his whole family with a light heart. The fact that none of them were ever admitted to the heavenly realm does not affect him in the least, for "remorse shall not enter there". He resolves however to someday take another look into hell and see if he can discern his poor good wife whose only wrong was to devote her religious energies in the wrong church.

However these two and only heavenly occupants locked arms and with loving caresses started out to feast their eyes upon all the gratifying luxuries that heaven holds. It so happened that in their wanderings they chanced to pass by the temple, and their attention was attracted to the striking of the celestial clock. They paused to examine the time and were not a little surprised to note that this clock did

not tell the time. It was then they discovered the hands of the clock did not move, for there was no time to record, and they were shocked with amazement when they came to realize the vast amount of time Mr. Mychel Miltedese Mandermore had spent there did not constitute even a beginning to the time that they must remain.

A theory of a Heavenly reward may be well,
But would not too much Heaven be almost Hell?







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